

Greek Monasticism in Southern Italy

The Life of Neilos in Context

Edited by BARBARA CROSTINI and INES ANGELI MURZAKU



ROUTLEDGE



Greek Monasticism in Southern Italy

This volume was conceived with the double aim of providing a background and a further context for the new Dumbarton Oaks English translation of the *Life of St Neilos from Rossano*, founder of the monastery of Grottaferrata near Rome in 1004. Reflecting this double aim, the volume is divided into two parts. Part I, entitled “Italo-Greek Monasticism,” builds the background to the *Life of St Neilos* by taking several multi-disciplinary approaches to the geographical area, history and literature of the region denoted as Southern Italy. Part II, entitled “The *Life of St Neilos*,” offers close analyses of the text of Neilos’s hagiography from socio-historical, textual, and contextual perspectives. Together, the two parts provide a solid introduction and offer in-depth studies with original outcomes and wide-ranging bibliographies. Using monasticism as a connecting thread between the various zones and St Neilos as the figure who walked over mountains and across many cultural divides, the essays in this volume span all regions and localities and try to trace thematic arcs between individual testimonies. They highlight the multicultural context in which Southern Italian Christians lived and their way of negotiating differences with Arab and Jewish neighbors through a variety of sources, and especially in saints’ lives.

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byzantin en Italie (with Jean-Marie Martin and Vivien Prigent): I. *La fabrique documentaire*, Rome, 2011; II. *Les cadres juridiques et sociaux et les institutions publiques*, Rome, 2012; III. *Décor monumental, objets, tradition textuelle*, Rome, 2015 (with Sulamith Brodbeck).

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tra Tardoantico e Medioevo, by A. Capone, Città del Vaticano 2015, 215–239; Fozio, *Biblioteca*, intr. L. Canfora, by N. Bianchi-C. Schiano *et al.*, Pisa 2016.

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Introduction

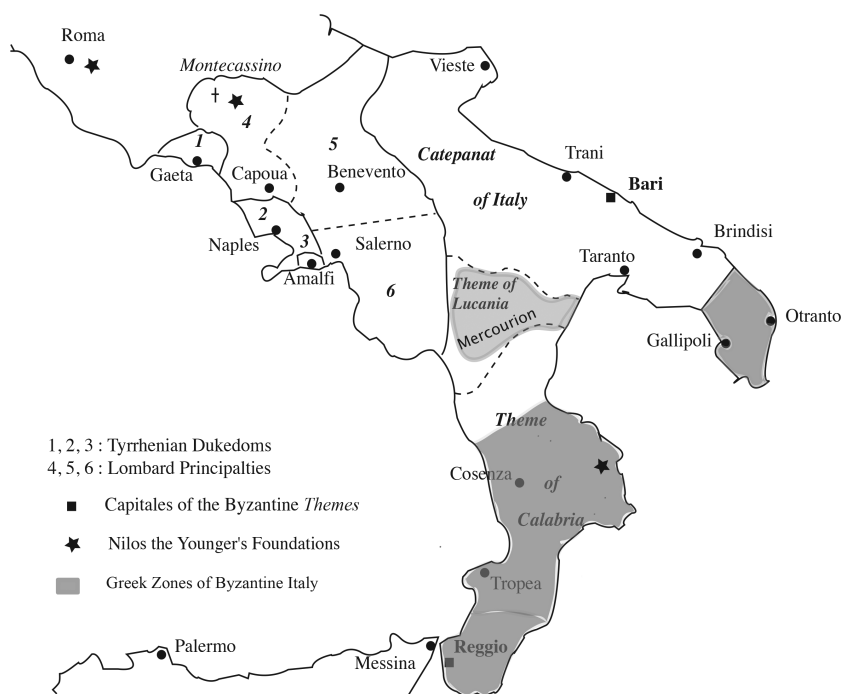
Barbara Crostini

This volume was conceived with the double aim of providing a background and a further context for the new English translation of the *Life of St Neilos from Rossano* (*Bibliotheca Hagiographica Graeca* and *Novum Auctarium* 1370), founder of the monastery of Grottaferrata near Rome in 1004. The translation has been prepared by the volume's co-editor Ines Angeli Murzaku and by one of the volume's contributors, Raymond Capra, together with Douglas Milewski, for the Dumbarton Oaks series Medieval Texts in Translation.¹ Both scholars work in a US higher education environment where the paucity of available literature on topics related to this text is sorely felt. Thus, the endeavor of putting together an English-language volume that could reflect the state-of-the-art international scholarship on this particular region, time and subject was conceived and developed, and this volume of collected essays is its final outcome.

Reflecting this double aim, the volume is divided into two parts. Part I, entitled 'Italo-Greek Monasticism', builds the background to the *Life of St Neilos* by taking several multi-disciplinary approaches to the geographical area, history and literature of the region denoted as Southern Italy. Part II, entitled 'The *Life of St Neilos*', comes closer to an analysis of the text of Neilos's hagiography from socio-historical, textual and contextual perspectives. Together, the two parts provide a solid introduction and offer in-depth studies with original outcomes and wide-ranging bibliographies. We have been fortunate in receiving contributions from leading scholars in this field and believe that we have achieved our goal of creating a volume that will disseminate their work more broadly and thereby stimulate further research.

Southern Italy (see Figure I.1) is a complex reality both geographically and historically. It is not only regional through its being on the margins of the Italian peninsula and in-between the Eastern Byzantine and the Western Latin empires, but also compartmentalized as it is further fractioned within itself into a number of individual local realities that defeat attempts at more general characterizations. Such divisions, territorial and political (and therefore cultural), have in turn generated very specialized

*Political Map of Southern Italy at the Beginning of the 11th Century
(Before the Norman Conquest)*



*Figure I.1 Political map of Southern Italy at the beginning of the 11th century
(before the Norman conquest)*

'Convivencia between Christians: the Greek and Latin Communities of Byzantine South Italy (9th–11th centuries)', in *Negotiating Co-Existence: Communities, Cultures and 'Convivencia' in Byzantine Society, Selected Papers from the European Science Foundation Exploratory Workshop, Dublin, 1–3 October 2010*, co-edited with Sergio La Porta, Bochumer Altertumswissenschaftliches Colloquium 96 (Trier: Wissenschaftlicher Verlag Trier, 2013), pp. 203–220.

Source: Annick Peters-Custot (Saint-Etienne/Lyon)

areas of study, which, with few exceptions, have belonged to Italian researchers often closely identified with those local realities. While the rich and valuable contributions of these schools of research are reflected by the authors within this volume as well as in each chapter's extensive bibliography, the approach taken here has been as wide-ranging and inclusive as possible. Using monasticism as a connecting thread between the various zones and hinging on St Neilos as the figure who walked over mountains and across many cultural divides, the essays in this volume

span all regions and localities and try to trace thematic arcs between individual testimonies.

The fascination of this territory has consisted, from the early middle ages, precisely in this unique encounter of languages, ethnicities, religions and civilizations: from the ninth-century Arab conquests in Sicily and Calabria,² to the extensive Jewish presence in the south of Puglia,³ the indigenous Byzantine Christians had a lot to learn, to cope with, and define themselves against, even before thinking about any distinction with their Latin co-religionists,⁴ who later came embodied in the shape of conquering Norman powers.⁵ All these realities are reflected in the volume through the mirrors of hagiographical narrative and material remains: in the first section, as broad background to the *Life of St Neilos*; more closely in the second part, through a closer look at the episodes of this saint's *Life*. While the *Life of St Neilos* gives us a snapshot of late tenth- to early eleventh-century Calabria, Campania and Latium, other saints' *Lives* and their cults offer rich sources of information for intercultural interaction over a vast and varied territory.⁶

Part I begins with four grounding essays. The Reverend David Hester sets out the spiritual outline of Southern Italian monasticism by drawing out thematically the strands of observance and asceticism found in the hagiographies. Based on seventeen texts relating to sixteen different saints, Hester identifies a pattern of evolution in the 'cycle of growth in monastic perfection which can be divided into four major parts: the call to monastic life, the importance of a spiritual Father, the disciple as an apprentice to a Father, and the gradual growth in monastic perfection.' He further singles out the areas for such perfection along the lines of the biblical and patristic models that are held up to the monk in his journey. While some of the steps towards the attainment of spiritual maturity consist of virtues such as humility and detachment, other features are primarily practical, consisting of activities such as prayer, work, and correct interaction with both people and nature.

The normative aspect of monastic life is brought home by the detailed survey of the extant rules, or *typika*, redacted for South Italian coenobia, often by the respective founders, but at times anonymously. Cristina Torre presents the evidence, including some aspects of manuscript transmission, problems of authorship and chronology, testing traditional regional divisions and probing the texts for their sources and impact. These documents take us to the heart of the regulated activities of important monasteries such as the Patir at Rossano in Calabria, the St Savior *de lingua Phari* near Messina, the monastery of Casole near Otranto, and, curiously, to the distant island of Pantelleria where a special institution, at times sounding like a place for detention rather than spiritual solace, is documented for us (most probably) by a text peculiarly extant only in Slavonic translation. One can carry out comparative work between prescriptions regarding a set of common issues, such as liturgical observance,

diet and ownership of goods, in order to yield a profile of the coenobitic ideal most suitable to the specific case. But it is often in the degree of detail that these documents vary, leaving us to some extent surprised by the minutiae that were worthy of consideration from time to time, and wondering too quite how these rules matched each reality. An interesting example of such discrepancy is highlighted by Torre in the instructions for the election of the new abbot after the death of Gregory, abbot of St Philip of Fragalà. While the rules lay down that the community should wait up to three years for the return from Jerusalem of the abbot appointed as successor, in practice Gregory appointed his successor himself on the point of death, thus overstepping both the rule and his own previous choice of successor. Travel outside the community is an interesting case of tension between the rules of stability and belonging and the custom of pilgrimages, about which we have many accounts from hagiographies. In discussing the text of Casole, an Apulian foundation famous for his erudite abbot, Nicholas, at the beginning of the thirteenth century, Torre stresses the symbolic import of food rituals and fasting, that show how this monastery is indebted to Byzantine customs beyond its literary dependence on Stoudite traditions. Torre succeeds in presenting an ample panorama of monastic rules without omitting details, while at the same time being able to point to the broader implications regarding allegiance to specific spiritual traditions, as far as these can be determined and discriminated from each other.

Vera von Falkenhausen accompanies us beyond the limits of the deepmost South, across to Campania and Southern Latium, and we could hardly ask for a better guide. Her expertise in the field is witnessed by innumerable citations of her work in each bibliography; yet one admires the freshness of the approach as in each contribution von Falkenhausen takes a different angle and delivers new evidence with unfailing sharpness. Here she chooses to take us on an exploration of the many foundations, monastic and ecclesiastical, of a region that will be key to the transition for St Neilos from Calabria to his final destination, Grottaferrata near Rome. With characteristic assurance, von Falkenhausen handles the documentary evidence and demonstrates her central concern, that the phenomenon of monastic communities in those areas reflected a constant flux of immigrants into these regions, from the South, and, in turn, from Eastern areas that belonged to Byzantium. Like today, people come to new regions with a cultural baggage that does not easily fall away even in new circumstances. The struggle to maintain the Greek language and rituals is successful so long as the foundations could keep a substantial independence with respect to larger local institutions, such as Latin Benedictine houses. Gregorian legislation against private foundations at the end of the eleventh century and its subsequent implementation in the twelfth and thirteenth centuries resulted in a loss of independence, which impacted negatively on the preservation of Greek customs. Thus,

while the absorption into Latin customs was not the primary aim of such reforms, which primarily sought to counteract the power of the laity over monastic and ecclesiastical property, its side effects were deleterious to the Greek ethnic minorities in those regions.

A salutary reminder that not all that is Italo-Greek is necessarily monastic comes from the voice of art-historian Lorenzo Riccardi, whose presentation of monumental art and architecture from the territory of Calabria is a fascinating journey into the material remains of the region. Riccardi points out with honesty the often insoluble difficulties of distinguishing between monastic and cathedral architectures, especially when keeping in mind the transitory character of some foundations and the possible change of destination and use over time of the individual structures. In monumental decoration, monastic saints are selected as subjects besides sacred scenes. We encounter an image of St Neilos in the church of St Hadrian at San Demetrio Corone, the locality where Neilos first built a community on his own private property. Even though the present extant structure does not reflect the initial foundation, which was, we are told by the sources, intentionally poor and precariously built, Neilos's presence in the frescos is a tangible commemoration of that experience. Riccardi gathers for us the images of monastics extant in various Calabrian churches, such as the pair of Phantinos and (possibly) Neilos of the church at Scalea, by some identified as the grange monastery St Nicholas *de Siracusa*, all the while methodologically cautioning between too readily associating any monastic presence with a sure sign of exclusive monastic usage. Lay and aristocratic patronage, as well as other forms of destination, need to be taken into account for this region as well. The quality of the paintings also provides an important indication of the background to their execution. Their dating, depending mainly upon stylistic appreciation, is often one of the most problematic aspects, despite being fundamental for a contextualized interpretation.

A modern approach to the study of hagiography, departing from the Bollandists' lists and archives, has sought to understand the nature of such narratives beyond their historical truth-value. New systematizations of primary materials and detailed studies include socio-economic and psychological perspectives, amply made use of in this volume. A corpus of "about forty texts" from Southern Italy is conveniently listed by Mario Re in a recent handbook,⁷ and it is opportune to warn the uninitiated about the many cases of homonymy only partly clarified by the further designations of a saint through his/her locality or nickname, since these can themselves vary from time to time, and from author to author. Mastering such corpus is not something quickly or easily done, and relying on the work of scholars who have dedicated years of study to a few of these texts reveals the many problems and issues that they contain.⁸ On the positive side, their narrative textures and strategies offer an inexhaustible source for ever more subtle interpretations. This richness alone would

warrant a wider circulation for this literature. It is not clear, however, that distinctive and all-encompassing traits can be gathered that satisfactorily define Southern Italian hagiography as such. Mario Re discusses this problem, and finds some mileage in the characterization of Southern Italian saints as being close to the land and the people who worked the land, that is, as essentially rural rather than urban saints. These saints tied to their landscape often inhabit its most impervious places, such as the rock-cut cave dwellings still visible today. Yet while the Italo-Greek saint is almost invariably also a monk – to the extent that sanctity and monasticism merge indistinguishably –, the heremital vocation is only one aspect of this choice. More frequently, the existence of communities surrounding these saints forms both the background and the outcome of the saint's activity. These communities, however, can be large or small, established with a progeny (as for Bartholomew of Simeri) or remaining ephemeral and shifting, as was even St Neilos's own community before moving northwards and finally finding some longer-lasting stability at Grottaferrata. Stephanos Efthymiades emphasizes the social role of saints in negotiating Christian ideals for the laity.⁹ For example, the interaction between medicine and supernatural healing practices is a recurrent challenge in many of these narratives, including that about St Neilos. The saint's wisdom shines when discriminating between magical healing, respite from bodily pain and true salvation, often not by displaying a theoretically articulate orthodoxy, but through simple actions performed in the humble knowledge of belonging to Christ as the only true healer.

Aspects of the local saint's interaction with the varied cultural realities of these regions are thoroughly explored by the essays in this volume. Adele Cilento concentrates on the family nucleus as creating special networks among the saint's relatives and as expanding links to a local, but also a more distant, community. By analyzing the tenth-century *Lives* of Sabas, Christopher and Makarios, she emphasizes how such networks replace the idea of severing oneself from family ties for ascetic purposes. While detachment may be good for spiritual life, it is in fact in the mutual care that parents and siblings take of each other in a hostile world that the tenuous shoot of the love for God can flourish and find a concrete outcome in a saintly life. Resistance to Islam is part of the picture, of course, and is brought peculiarly near by the oriental name of Sabas's mother, Kali. That the author of this triple *Life* is named as Orestes, patriarch of Jerusalem, testifies on the other hand to the spreading networks of fame departing from Southern Italy, and reminds one of the influx of Palestinian monks into those regions around the ninth and tenth centuries.

The question of influences in style and rituals, and the balancing act that the local realities made between this ideal of Byzantine practice and the more mixed local customs, influenced also by the closeness to Latin-rite places and Rome itself, is a recurrent issue in the assessment of the region and its inhabitants. In the examples from Italo-Greek hagiographies

analyzed by Gioacchino Strano, we encounter the thaumaturgic powers of St Cyprian of Reggio as well as the miraculous escape of Luke, bishop of Isola, from the fire which attacked the place where he was celebrating the eucharist in the Byzantine rite. This episode can be considered a concrete reverberation of the theological issues concerning the understanding of the eucharistic sacrifice that were one of the dividing factors in the 1054 schism between the churches.¹⁰ The clerical focus of this latter hagiography can also be viewed in light of the more general phenomenon of the professionalization of the clergy, spreading everywhere in the eleventh century, and affecting sacramental practices. The third saint chosen by Strano, Bartholomew of Simeri, founder of the Patir monastery near Rossano, opens up the world of Southern Italy to the interaction with Byzantium. Discussing the problems of exact chronology regarding Bartholomew's trip to Constantinople and his meeting with the emperor, Strano evaluates the journey as the enactment of that connection of the Italo-Greek communities with the heart of the Byzantine Empire, whence Bartholomew returned with icons and books, furnishings for his new foundations. As Riccardi also noted, this influx in turn stimulates and inspires local production, not least in the area of manuscript copying and illustration. Riccardi touches on the peculiarities of this local production, so indicative of indigenous cultural choices and aesthetic horizons, and a sign of the literature available to the monks in this region.¹¹

Bartholomew of Simeri is also one of the protagonists of Enrico Morini's account of how the prestige of Italo-Greek saints, such as Saint Phantinos, undoubtedly spread to Mount Athos. Morini introduces the figure of Phantinos' disciple, Saint Nikephoros the Naked, who practiced his ascetic feats on the Holy Mountain. Despite subsequent traditions preserving nicknames such as 'Italian' and 'Calabrian' which would indicate a Southern Italian origin, exactly who came from where is not always certain. Athonite monasticism, which was at that time being developed according to the rule of Athanasios the Athonite, forms the changing backdrop to these monks's *Lives*, in a climate where the tension between solitary and cenobitic forms of monasticism was still – and perhaps always remained – rife with resonances. Signs of strife between competing ideals are reflected back onto issues of ethnicity and provenance, as the documents from Athos analyzed by Morini attest. Nevertheless, a continued interest of this central monastic community (or rather, federation of communities) in the best products of the Italo-Greek experience of ascesis is both attested and continues down to modern times.

This first more general part is concluded by the essay by Claudio Schiano on Nicholas of Otranto, whom we have already mentioned above as the most famous abbot of Casole in Puglia. This exceptionally learned monk is presented as a singular witness to the complex relations that had to be negotiated between papal obedience and a deep understanding and sense of belonging to the Byzantine tradition. Nicholas, too, traveled to

Constantinople, and it is interesting to witness that in the twelfth century the traffic of books might well have gone both ways. Schiano's study focuses on the textual tradition of the *Tria syntagmata*, delineating the context of its bold and original pronouncements on dogmas and canon law made, however, in a spirit of constructive confrontation rather than sheer hostile controversy.¹² Thus Nicholas is well-placed as a mediator with Rome and intercedes through his informed and learned perorations for the preservation of Greek custom all the while remaining within the Roman jurisdiction, as Schiano fascinatingly exposes. Although happening at a particular time and place, Nicholas's intervention can be taken as symbolic of that constant renegotiation of boundaries and allegiances that each bishop and community experienced in the area of Southern Italy between the ninth and thirteenth centuries.

With Part II, we turn our focus more narrowly on the text of the *Life of St Neilos*. The Greek text was edited by Germano Giovanelli in 1976, but a new edition, revised after the meticulous work by Enrica Follieri, is in press thanks to her students, Francesco D'Aiuto and Andrea Luzzi, the latter also a contributor to this volume. One by one, we encounter in this section the themes already broached in the opening part, but through different sources. We begin with issues of interfaith and intercultural interaction, with the Jewish and Muslim world respectively, in the essays by Giancarlo Lacerenza and Alessandro Vanoli. Lacerenza takes us step by step through the purportedly anti-Jewish passages of the *Life*, which are mainly known through the episode(s) of the encounter with the figure of the Jewish doctor, Shabbetai Donnolo. Lacerenza is able to expose the biblical and other traditional references that underlie the literary construction of these passages in the hagiography, and to at least partially explain through these references the otherwise puzzling situations described as historical in the *Life*. Particularly significant is the episode in which a man whose relative had killed a Jew is threatened with crucifixion. Neilos intercedes for this innocent man by addressing the Jewish judge with an exhortation to honor the Old Testament law, casting the terms of this law in seemingly ambiguous, but ultimately biblical, terms. The anachronistic nature of crucifixion as a punishment pushes the meaning onto a different plane of reasoning, where, however, mention of these references still operates a semantic transfer and allows for a meaningful exchange and outcome between the parties concerned. It is rather our problem to decode quite how these relationships functioned, but that they did take place outside blanket exchanges of prejudiced insults is a tribute to the shared dignity of both parties in the workings of this mixed society.

The Arabs in Alessandro Vanoli's contribution are present as traders, as well as enemies to the safety of Christians in the region. Using primary Arab sources, Vanoli builds a geography of interaction and exchanges around nevralgic sea-ports, such as Amantea, that acted as trading stops

in the routes from Africa to Northern Europe, and from Spain to the East. Vanoli also stresses the daily presence of Muslims in the region, and recalls the building of a mosque in tenth-century Reggio. This fact creates a significant parallel between Reggio and Constantinople, where similarly the use of a mosque (*masgida*) for Muslim prisoners and merchants is recorded in the sources from that time.¹³ Even this detail separates out the reality of Southern Italy from that of the rest of the Italian peninsula, and further north in Europe, and makes the experience of its population closer to the cultural diversity of the Byzantines at the heart of the Empire.

The next two papers are more narrowly focused on questions of interpretation. Raymond Capra writes an extended commentary note on one single lexeme used by Neilos, ‘ceramiclast,’ or in transliteration ‘chytroklastes,’ eviscerating all the possible implications for this *hapax legomenon* invented by the saint, or by his hagiographer. Capra singles out the two parts that make this new word for deep exploration, ‘chytra’ and ‘klazw,’ each component explored through the recesses of ancient Greek usage and yielding a sacred ritual background for the ‘broken pot’ at the center of the episode from Neilos’s *Life*, where a disciple’s carelessness is reprimanded by the saint. The assonance with ‘iconoclast’ is also noted by Capra as a sign of typological stigmatization of a fault, with wider implications. This essay is a good example of how philological investigation, even when limited to one curious word, can open up a world of resonances and significances for those who take the time to look into the value of linguistic choices.

Andrea Luzzi certainly belongs to this group of careful philologists. Like his teacher, Enrica Follieri, he can pause and ask of the text all the possible nuances and implications. The passage, or rather, the lacuna in the transmitted Greek text that he is analyzing for this volume is one such instance. With sure hand, Luzzi leads us through the hazards of manuscript transmission, and warns against easy conclusions when looking at material evidence. The now-missing leaves in a Grottaferrata manuscript contained a passage whose contents are now only preserved in the Latin translation by Cardinal Guglielmo Sirleto (d. 1585). Scholars who have examined the matter, among them Follieri herself and recently Stefano Caruso, have put forward the hypothesis of voluntary curtailing – in other words, of intentional censuring – of the text, due to the compromising contents of the episode. Nevertheless, Luzzi re-examines both the context of the passage, and the practical dynamics of manuscript transmission, indicating that cause of the lacuna is unlikely to have been anything other than accidental, and, further, that the compromising passage with allegedly homoerotic overtones is in fact much less damning in this sense than previously thought. Ultimately, Luzzi’s analysis is convincing. Surely, one learns a lot in the process about the transmission of the *Life* and its readership by cardinals, scholars and the wider audience of monastic and lay communities interested in the *Life* of this saint.

With David Kalhous and Annick Peters-Custot we return to encounters between cultures. The Northern European saint, Adalbert of Prague, meets St Neilos in Rome, but the contours of this trip, its chronology and its causes are far from clear from the complex state in which the sources have reached us. Kalhous invokes a re-evaluation of the evidence. Adalbert is depicted as a restless person, likely of noble origins, who could have served as the bishop to his home church had he not in fact desired even greater challenges. One is struck by the fact that, despite his trip south, Adalbert honors the spoils of the great Benedict in the Northern French abbey of Fleury, while in the hymns that Neilos dedicates to saint Benedict, written in the shadow of Montecassino, it is here in Campania that Benedict's body lies, incontrovertibly.¹⁴ As Peters-Custot shows, Neilos is imbued of the local reality of Vellelucce, and moves along with Benedict in the landscape of Latium and Campania. His Greek poems in honor of Benedict, light of the Latins and legislator of all monks, play the part of advertising Montecassino as the saint's final resting place, and thus as a place for pilgrimage for the whole of Southern Italy, conveniently also located on the way to Rome. It is not surprising that Benedict is known to the East, as his *Life*, included in the *Dialogues* by Pope Gregory the Great, was translated into Greek by Pope Zacharias soon after its composition.¹⁵ Peters-Custot examines the relationship between the Greek *Life* and the verses, pointing out similarities and differences due to authorial choices as well as genre constraints. In the parallel Greek text (from Gassisi's 1906 edition) and English translation that she offers as an appendix to her paper, she helpfully includes references to this source in the margin.

From Montecassino, the final two papers lead us on to Neilos's final destination and "long-lasting" oeuvre, namely, the foundation of the monastery of Grottaferrata on the hills surrounding Rome, known as the 'Castelli Romani.' The Byzantine rite monastery placed close to the see of the papacy is still functioning today, preserving in its library a treasury of Greek manuscripts, among which many witnesses to the activities of Southern Italian monks and their liturgy, and still living a Byzantine liturgical tradition in the architecture, decoration and rituals of its church.¹⁶ Ines Angeli Murzaku is very keen to emphasize the foreignness of Neilos in his constant moving forward to new territories, embodying the ideal of *xeniteia* that makes of this life, and of its various adventures, only a temporary transition towards the eternal abodes. Yet while living this idea of transitoriness, Neilos did establish a heritage that outlasted him. Neilos's progeny comes to fulfillment in the *Life* of his disciple and fourth abbot of Grottaferrata, Bartholomew, whose figure is presented in the contribution by Angela Prinzi. Prinzi is sensitive in discerning the connections between hagiographical and hymnographical traditions, raising methodological issues that are applicable to this case, as well as to others (such as Neilos's treatment of Benedict). Bartholomew's cult found

new impetus in the thirteenth century, when John of Rossano was commissioned to write a new set of texts for his celebration, still extant in John's autograph manuscript at Grottaferrata. Prinzi takes us back and forth between the Rossanese origins, reflected onto Bartholomew from Neilos, and the new place of Grottaferrata, where Bartholomew lived the first moves of the new community together with Neilos, all the while looking at how the tradition about him was retrospectively enriched and modified *ad hoc* to fit the new needs of the community. Emblematic is the example of the interaction between Saint Bartholomew and Pope Benedict IX (Thephylact of Tusculum), where the pope (then also anti-pope) is not only helped by the saint to repent of his sin, but also led to join the monastic community after renouncing the pontificate. With the subtle manipulation of the details of the story of Bartholomew, we are led by Prinzi full-circle to the living tradition of Italo-Greek monasticism, from its cultural roots in Calabria to its vital expansion and sustenance at the doors of Rome.

There is no doubt, I think, that Southern Italy acted as a pivot between Latin and Greek Christianity because of its privileged position, which rendered its inhabitants and its monastics imbued with a double tradition, as well as with a deeper understanding of co-habitation between cultures and religions.¹⁷ So much transpires clearly from the pages of this volume, where many different aspects and details of such variety come to the fore from the pages dedicated to the description of the lives of a few special men, the Italo-Greek monastic saints. Towering among them is St Neilos, whose special charism consisted not only in his great asceticism leading to all the signs of spiritual maturity and wisdom, but also in his capacity for interaction with all the surrounding realities of his region, and beyond. We hope to stimulate the readers to continue in the discovery of his *Life* as a first-hand guide to Southern Italian Byzantine monasticism.

Notes

- 1 Murzaku, Capra and Milewski 2017.
- 2 For an accessible introduction, see Kreutz 1991.
- 3 Safran 2014 provides wide and fascinating evidence for Jewish and Christian everyday interaction and ritual practices.
- 4 Peter-Custot 2013.
- 5 The northern European origin of the Normans, and the international implications of their expansion, makes them a more popular subject in scholarship, while reserving an important place for Southern Italy in the picture. See Chibnall 2006, 75–103; Loud and Metcalfe 2002.
- 6 Oldfield 2014, esp. 107–16.
- 7 Re 2011, 248–53, with extensive bibliography at 253–8.
- 8 Exemplary has been the search for meaning and historico-cultural contextualization in the metrical *Life* of Leo of Catania (BHG 981c) by Augusta Aconcia Longo. See the posthumous article discussing the problems of

- interpretation as well as the ethics of scholarly methodology, Acconcia Longo 2015.
- 9 Efthymiades 2011.
 - 10 Smith III 1978.
 - 11 For a summary of the problems of attribution of manuscripts to Southern Italy, with both past and current criteria, see Hutter 2006. Hutter's Corpus of illustrated Greek manuscripts from Southern Italy now preserved at the Vatican Library is awaited. For the Otrantine production, see Lucà 2012. For the production of the later period, see the list of manuscripts assembled in Arnesano 2008. Much work remains to be done, and this field too is very complex and defies simple classifications.
 - 12 For a comprehensive history of the issue of papal primacy between Catholic and Orthodox, see now Siewicki 2017.
 - 13 Woods 2013.
 - 14 On the contours of this prolonged controversy as to the true resting place of Benedict's body, see Galdi 2014.
 - 15 See also the review in Crostini 2003.
 - 16 Parenti 2005.
 - 17 Montecassino consciously acted as such a meeting point for exchanges, particularly at the time of abbot Desiderius in the mid-eleventh century. For an essential historical introduction, see Cowdrey 1983.

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Part I

Italo-Greek monasticism



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1 Monastic spirituality of the Italo-Greek monks

David Hester

Throughout the three and a half centuries of Italo-Greek monastic life preserved in the surviving *bioi* of the great Italo-Greek spiritual Fathers, a fundamental unity is to be found in this monastic spiritual tradition. The Italo-Greek monks of this period all have the same heroes and all read the same Fathers and monastic legislators. Their heroes are scriptural figures like Moses, Elias, Elisaïos and Job, and great Fathers like Anthony of Egypt, Basil the Great and John Chrysostom. They hear about these men in their reading, in the divine services, and in the teachings of their own spiritual Fathers. These monks also all belong to the same empire and the same Greek Orthodox Church tradition. They are all part of the common Byzantine commonwealth that extended from Asia Minor to Southern Italy. They share in its ideals and its common religious and monastic aspirations. Some of the monks like Elias the Younger, Elias the Speleot, Phantinos the Younger and Bartholomew of Simeri even spent time in the Byzantine East.

In a certain sense it is difficult to present an exact and detailed analysis of the spirituality that underlies the Italo-Greek monastic life. The *bioi* that preserve and present it are not intended to be treatises on spirituality and the spiritual life. However, the *bioi*, while not being synthetic expositions of spiritual theology, do constantly express in their narratives a spiritual ideal and a way of monastic life that is presented for emulation and imitation. Central to this presentation is a cycle of growth in monastic perfection which can be divided into four major parts: the call to monastic life, the importance of a spiritual Father, the disciple as an apprentice to a Father and the gradual growth in monastic perfection. In these accounts, the monk first senses a call to monastic life, then goes to a spiritual Father and learns the monastic life as his disciple, and finally gradually progresses in perfection so that he too may perhaps become a spiritual Father to the next generation of disciples.

The call to the monastic life

In all of the Italo-Greek monastic *bioi* there is a constant mention, both in the case of the great Fathers and for their disciples, of a time in that

person's life in which he is moved to leave his daily way of life and he decides to become a monk. This call may come from outside, either from another monk or from the Scriptures, or through the example of a monk or a monastic community. It may also be a gradual desire that builds up within the individual for the monastic life. It may even come in the form of a dream or a vision. Elias the Speleot is at the Divine Liturgy when a monk comes and stands before him. The monk exhorts him to give up his rich clothing and become a monk. He does not believe this to be possible for him and waits until he is eighteen years old when he is moved by a passage from the Gospel calling him to renounce all his possessions.¹ Sabas the Younger is inspired by the example of his father, Christopher, to join him in his hermitage. His *bios* notes that he is moved to do this because he learned all these things from his father and thus "a divine yearning burned in his heart".² John Theristes is moved to begin the monastic life when the bishop who baptized and instructed him tells him about the life of John the Baptist. When he learns that John the Baptist went to live in the desert, he asks if he can do the same, and goes to a koinobion where the monks follow the asceticism of Basil the Great.³

For other monks there is an internal desire that grows within them for the monastic life. Philaretos of Seminara is described as having a desire for the monastic life that began in his youth. As a young man, he started asking himself questions about eternal life and the unsound state of the world. He decided that the monastic life is the only way of life that is blessed.⁴ Bartholomew of Simeri decides to become a monk as he comes to realize that "nothing which his parents hold sure and stable has importance because of Christ."⁵ Again for other monks the call to the monastic life involves dreams or visions. Christopher of Collesano has a dream three times in which the Archangel Michael tells him to go to Ktisma because "God does not want you in the world".⁶ Neilos of Rossano, while suffering from a high fever, is given a vision in which he vividly sees death and the future torments that are awaiting the sinner. He is very shaken by this vision and, without saying anything to anyone, leaves his household and goes off to the monasteries of the Merkourion.⁷

Despite the variety of ways in which one is called to the monastic life, the modes of response of those called all bear a similarity: the person must separate from the mundane, renounce their family and possessions, and be given the "yoke of Christ."⁸ The *bios* of Elias the Speleot speaks of the need to "separate and not touch the polluted world."⁹ In all the *bioi* the world is regarded in a disparaging light. It is held to be unsound, a place of vanity, unstable and passing.¹⁰ This renunciation of the world requires a severing from all blood connections. Philaretos, for example, is seen to refuse even to speak to his own relatives as they pass him by.¹¹ Elias the Speleot teaches his monks that they must forget their relatives on account of the command of Christ.¹²

The renunciation of the world also requires a renouncing of all possessions. The monks in the *bioi* give away all their possessions and refuse to accept any gifts. Philaretos states that the monastic tonsure is a sign of the stripping of one's self of all things and of contempt for all things that are in the world.¹³ Neilos, as his *bios* notes, thinks often about the peace of those who possess nothing and, shortly before his death, is seen to give his only earthly possessions, a few rags, to his disciples.¹⁴ Elias the Younger, to test his disciple Daniel, tells him to throw his only possession, his Psalter, into a swamp. After Daniel does this, he is then told to go back to retrieve it, with Elias noting that poverty must be embraced with zeal.¹⁵

Monastic life, however, is founded not only on separation and renunciation, but also on a joining and an acceptance. The monk turns from the world to be able to turn more fully to Christ. Neilos tells his friends, when he is about to leave to become a monk, that he has found a beautiful vineyard and must buy it.¹⁶ John Theristes tells his spiritual Fathers that he comes to the monastery because he desires the salvation of his soul.¹⁷ The ideal and goal that is held out for each of these monks is the hope for a future reward. Philaretos reminds his hearers of this when he tells them to remember that all that is in the world is passing, and that their only hope is in the future, in God.¹⁸ Elias the Speleot expresses these thoughts when he states that "the sufferings of the present time are not to be compared to the future glory to be revealed in us."¹⁹

The role of the spiritual father

For the one who answers the call to the monastic life, the first step on the way to becoming a monk is that of finding a spiritual Father, a monk known for his holiness and way of living the monastic life. The spiritual Father may be a hermit or may live in a cenobitic community. In each of the *bioi* the spiritual Father is the central figure, and each of these Fathers is noted for his ability to serve as a spiritual guide. Each of the monks described in the *bioi* goes to a spiritual Father to learn the monastic life from someone who is more experienced and who has progressed far in holiness. This is clearly expressed in the *bios* of Elias the Younger, where Elias goes to each of the Fathers on Mount Sinai to learn a different virtue from each one,²⁰ and in the *bios* of Christopher, where it is noted that he learned different virtues from different Fathers.²¹

The spiritual Father is responsible for determining where and how a monk is to live the monastic life. A Father would decide when a monk is mature enough to become a hermit, as is seen in the *bios* of Christopher of Collesano, whose Father sends him to live in a hermitage where he is to make better progress in monastic perfection.²² It is the spiritual Father of Elias the Speleot who sends Elias back to his own home area in Calabria to live the monastic life.²³ It is the spiritual Fathers of the

Merkourion – “the great John and the celebrated Phantinos, and the angelic Zachary” – who tell Neilos to begin the monastic life, and to receive the monastic habit (schema) in a monastery that is in an area controlled by the Lombards.²⁴

There is a special relationship that develops between a spiritual Father and his disciples. Luke of Demena becomes like his spiritual Father, Elias the Speleot, “conforming himself to the ways of his most wise instructor”.²⁵ Elias the Speleot is seen to live in such a close relationship with his spiritual Father, Arsenios, that they become “thus another Elias and Elisaïos . . . as one soul in two bodies”.²⁶ Perhaps the strongest affirmation of the affection that develops between a disciple and his spiritual Father is found in the relationship between Neilos and his disciple, Stephen. When Stephen comes to Neilos and is accepted as one of his disciples, it becomes obvious that the only way that Neilos can correct Stephen, who is rather simple and lazy, is to treat him harshly and to be severe with him.²⁷ But later when Neilos believes that Stephen has been carried off by Saracens, Neilos is so sorrowful that he is willing to give his life for Stephen and be a slave with him.²⁸ Finally, at the end of his life, after Stephen’s death, Neilos so greatly mourns Stephen’s repose that he states that he has been Stephen’s life-long executioner and then asks that a double grave be dug for Stephen and himself.²⁹

There are certain specific functions that a spiritual Father exercises among his disciples. The first of these is to be a teacher, admonisher and rebuker. Teaching is an important part of the routine of a monastery, of a small group of monks, or even of a single monk who lives with a spiritual Father. The *bioi* present many of these teachings. Neilos has some sixty monks at one point in his monastery whom he would gather around himself for sacred readings and vigils. During this time many of the monks would fall asleep, but Bartholomew the Younger would remain awake, “seeking after the difficulties of the Scripture.”³⁰ Elias the Younger is noted in his teachings for being “pleasing, accessible, affable, proceeding along the just path, not having sublimity without humility nor contemptible humility.”³¹ When Neilos the Younger meets the monks of Monte cassino and takes a long time before he is willing to speak with them, the *bios* notes that he has the ability to give discourses which are “a useful goad and help to the lazy and weak and to those following the middle road, proceeding harmoniously and righteously, a good yoke and a useful guide”.³² Neilos even employed a pedagogical method in his teachings in which he would use maxims, or troparia from the canons, which he would teach his disciples to memorize, and if that were not possible, he would even write them down and hang the paper on the disciple’s neck or arm until it was memorized.³³

The second important function of the spiritual Father as presented in these *bioi* is that of serving as an example to be imitated. The *bios* of Saints Christopher and Makarios begins by praising those who illuminate

and are guides.³⁴ It then states that Christopher is an example for all monks to follow in his prayer, vigils, psalmody, works, service and obedience. It states of him that "the leader must become an example to those who are with him, just as Christ was to his apostles".³⁵ Elias the Younger is called the "exact norm and rule of monastic life: calm, simple, putting on a character which reveals the serenity and tranquility of his soul".³⁶ The role of the spiritual Father as exemplar is highlighted in all of the *bioi* because the very purpose for their being written is to make the exemplary role of these great monks more visible and better able to be imitated. The *bios* of Elias the Younger notes that those who listen to the *bios* are "not only to be hearers but imitators through all of life, so that we may be held worthy of the same glory coming in the kingdom of heaven."³⁷ The *bios* of Bartholomew the Younger states this by noting that "nothing knows how to excite us to imitation better than the memory of the Fathers where these are narrated with sincerity and examined carefully, and passed on to the ears of prudent children."³⁸

A third aspect of spiritual paternity is found in the important role of the spiritual Father as intercessor, mediator and reconciler. This role of the spiritual Father takes on different forms. When, for example, the boat of the monastery of Bartholomew of Simeri is captured by Saracen pirates, Bartholomew and his monks gather in the church temple and pray that their brothers be released from captivity, which they soon are.³⁹ Or when Neilos senses that his monks are under diabolic attack, he protects them by walking among them and encouraging them to call on the name of Jesus Christ.⁴⁰ In some cases of intercession it is not even necessary for a Father to be present. As when the priest Lukios is caught in a fire and he calls upon the name of Elias the Speleot, who is in his cave in a different place, both the priest and his house are saved.⁴¹

Another aspect of the intercessory and mediatory role of these Fathers is that of seeking for reconciliation among men. This role is seen in the intervention of Neilos in the affair caused by the election of an antipope. Here Neilos tries to bring about a reconciliation between pope and antipope. When this does not happen, Neilos shows God's displeasure at this failure by foretelling the imminent death of the pope because of his mistreatment of the antipope.⁴² Neilos also seeks reconciliation with two brothers who live near his monastery. Although they are constantly calumniating against him, Neilos tries to stop their hatred by never saying anything evil about them. After having no success in this, he goes to the brothers to ask pardon of them. This act brings about reconciliation and peace.⁴³

A final aspect of these intercessory powers is seen in the work of these spiritual Fathers as intercessors after death. This is mentioned in most of the *bioi*. The *bios* of Saint Sabas the Younger ends, for example, with a prayer calling upon Sabas to offer his rich and compassionate intercession before the Lord.⁴⁴ And the *bios* of Neilos ends with a prayer

asking the saint to intercede for all who read or hear of the virtuous deeds recounted in the *bios*.⁴⁵

The disciple as apprentice

After a person has the initial experience of being called to the monastic life, the next major step is to go to a spiritual Father. Here the young monk is to develop a strong bond with his spiritual Father, becoming a kind of apprentice to him and gradually growing in perfection in the spiritual life as his Father is also growing. This relationship is very close and is based on complete obedience to the Father and his will. The *bioi* contain many examples of this type of obedience. Elias the Speleot tells his monks to cut down a tree that is near the entrance to the monastery. A monk, who is at first afraid that he might be hurt by such work, obediently cuts down the tree at the word of Elias.⁴⁶ When Neilos of Rossano was a young monk, John, an elder in the monastery, wanted to test Neilos by giving him a large glass of wine to drink. The elder knew Neilos never drank wine, but Neilos after asking for a blessing drinks all of it immediately out of a deep sense of obedience.⁴⁷ Neilos later expects the same obedience from his monks. When, for example, Stephen brings him a basket that an elder from another monastery had taught him to make, Neilos orders him to destroy it since he had made it without permission.⁴⁸ Again Neilos, wanting to test the obedience of his monks, orders them to cut down all the excess grape vines of the monastery. The monks, saying nothing, go forth praying and fulfill his command.⁴⁹

There is a theology of obedience that is found in many of the *bioi*. Obedience is seen, first of all, to be the way to bring a monk into a closer rapport with God. For the person who obeys God's commands, the *bios* of Elias the Younger notes, there is a special relationship with God in which God answers all the requests of the obedient one in proportion to his fulfillment of God's commandments.⁵⁰ Obedience is also seen as the way to break one's own will so as to be obedient to Christ. Nikephoros, for example, blesses Sabas telling him: "O child, observe obedience, for Christ came not to do his own will, but that of his Father."⁵¹ The importance of obedience is highlighted in the *bioi* by many demonstrations of the bad results of disobedience. Neilos, for example, severely reprimands two monks who cook a meal in secret some distance from their monastery, so that they do not have to fast. Neilos reproaches them both for not trusting that he would provide something for them to eat and for doing that which is against the rule.⁵² Neilos is even more severe with his own nephew who is a monk in his monastery. When the boy, along with some other monks, drinks water from a Holy Cup found along the road, he is severely reprimanded by his uncle for not showing proper respect for holy objects. Neilos refuses to speak with the boy who is so crushed by his uncle's actions that he falls ill and eventually dies. Neilos refuses

to visit the boy during his illness, and after his death, in great mourning, he notes that he did not comfort the boy so that he would in his time of tribulation come to repent and have God receive him.⁵³

The second major component in the rapport of the disciple with the spiritual Father is that of the confession of sins and the revelation of all thoughts. A monk disciple must be open and transparent to his spiritual Father. Elias the Younger has many people confess their secret faults to him because he treats them in such a way that people find it easy to confess to him.⁵⁴ For Bitaios it is noted that many people confess to him because he helps them to see the foolishness of human nature and the need to be confirmed in penitence so as to turn from evil.⁵⁵ But it is not only faults and sins that a monk reveals to his spiritual Father, but also thoughts and desires. In the *bios* of Neilos there is a good example of this revelation of thoughts when it is noted that at one point Neilos begins to have doubts about the interpretation that one of his spiritual Fathers, John, gives to a passage of Saint Gregory the Theologian. Neilos is immediately tempted by Satan, who appears to him under the guise of Saints Peter and Paul, and gives him a heretical interpretation of the passage. Neilos is troubled by this interpretation, and after praying that the thought be removed from him, goes immediately to John to tell him everything that happened so as to be healed.⁵⁶

This confession of one's thoughts is important for the psychic healing of the monk. A monk needs to "lay bare his own passions, and divulge his evil and polluted thoughts", as the *bios* of Christopher notes, so that he can be healed.⁵⁷ This is the goal of this revelation, the therapy of thought, so that a monk can be directed more completely towards God. As this goal is more and more attained, the monk grows in perfection. Through this revelation of his thoughts Elias the Speleot "learns to purify his thoughts to the farthest point, for his alacrity of spirit gave him power over the body".⁵⁸ Through this transparent relationship with a Father, a monk novice deepens his obedience and allows the Father to better lead and direct him in living the monastic way of life, and the novice learns to have better control over his desires, impulses and thoughts.

The active way of monastic perfection

Under the guidance of a spiritual Father, and often in a life lived in common with other monks, the monk novice begins to follow a way of life which is to lead him to live ever more perfectly as a monk. The means that the Father employs to lead his disciple into this way of life are made up of two major components: an active component which emphasizes human effort, and a passive component which emphasizes a surrender to divine grace and the guidance of the Holy Spirit. These two ways exist side by side, but here will be presented separately beginning with the active way.

In all the *bioi*, the active way needed for pursuing monastic perfection is constantly emphasized. A monk is expected to put forth great struggles and efforts so as to live in asceticism, vigilance, detachment, prayer and work. This active way emphasized the fact that a monk cannot remain passive, expecting perfection to come to him, but rather needs to work, toil and fight to be able to progress in living the monastic life. This need for human effort is seen in the Gospel passage used in the *bios* of Elias the Speleot in which he exhorts his monks to ascetical struggle: "The kingdom of heaven is for those who use force."⁵⁹ The deeds that are demanded of the monks are not simple or easy, but rather require a struggle.

Asceticism

Three images employed frequently in the *bioi* to describe the effort required in monastic life are those of the martyr, the athlete and the soldier. The *bios* of Saints Christopher and Makarios begins with a prologue praising martyrs and holy monks, both of whom are seen to have suffered a type of martyrdom, the one in blood and the other in conscience. Here monks are called martyrs of conscience because they give themselves up daily as a holocaust before God.⁶⁰ Monks are also called athletes. Philaretos, for example, is commended by the hegoumen of his monastery for the hard labors he undergoes, in which he is like "the master wrestler (who) fights with his adversary".⁶¹ The monks of the Merkourion are called in the *bios* of Sabas those who "entered into the ascetical palaestra and compelled nature to live with suffering".⁶² Monks are also spoken of as soldiers. Elias the Younger is described in his *bios* as arming himself against pride with "weapons that were for him not carnal but empowered by God: hope, the mantle of faith, righteousness, and the spiritual sword."⁶³ Even the monastic schema is described using martial imagery. Nikodemos, after being called a soldier of Christ, is described as fighting against the ruler of this world with his "holy and blessed schema like a breastplate, having put on the helmet of salvation and been fortified in turn by the shield of hope."⁶⁴

With monastic life understood to be a constant struggle and a continuous effort, there are certain practices of asceticism that characterize the monastic life of the Italo-Greek monks. In all the *bioi* there are constant references to a variety of forms of ascetical practice. This variety is well described in the *bios* of Elias the Younger which speaks of Elias practicing "intensified fasting, more abundant prayer, sleeping on the bare earth, tears, sighs, beatings on the breast, innumerable prostrations, silent cries from his heart reaching up to heaven."⁶⁵ These ascetical practices focus on an asceticism that concerns food, sleep, clothing and shelter for the monks.

The *bioi* speak constantly of the monks fasting, for longer or shorter periods, and of their rigidity in controlling the kinds of foods that they eat and the frequency with which they eat them. The *bios* of Christopher states that Christopher would eat only every three or four days, and at times would spend entire weeks with no food.⁶⁶ Fasting is so important for the monastic life that it is part of the daily routine and cycle followed by the monks. The *bioi* speak of monks eating food only as needed, and “eating only once a day that which is ordained without reproach by (the monastic) profession”.⁶⁷ In addition, it is noted that monks continually follow the ascetical fast, refraining from certain foods and usually keeping to simple uncooked foods. The *bios* of Bitalios notes that he lives only on herbs and water.⁶⁸ That of Christopher states that he only eats grains, raw vegetables, or fruits and herbs from the forest, and that he rarely eats bread, cooked vegetables, or herbs with oil and salt.⁶⁹ One particular food that the *bioi* note is forbidden for those in monastic life is meat. The *bios* of Elias the Speleot is particularly severe in its judgment of monks who eat meat. The *bios* presents Elias sternly reprimanding one of his monks whom he discovers eating meat. To show the monk the foolishness of his actions, Elias calls over the dogs of the monastery to eat the meat, which even they refuse to touch because of their habit of not eating meat. He then tells the monks that those who eat meat are like bloodsucking wild animals that are unclean.⁷⁰

It is not only in food that a monk is to be ascetical, but also in his need for sleep. The *bioi* often speak of monks spending entire nights in vigil, praying and reading the Scriptures. Bartholomew the Younger, for example, is noted for his ability to keep awake during the vigils that Neilos keeps with his monks. When all the other monks fall asleep, Bartholomew alone remains awake, asking Neilos to interpret difficult passages of Scripture for him.⁷¹

The final aspect common to the asceticism of the Italo-Greek monks is asceticism practiced in clothing and shelter. Monks wear very simple clothing, some of them wearing no clothing at all. Bartholomew of Simeri wanders barefoot, with only one torn and sweat-stained tunic and a belt made of animal skin.⁷² Philaretos was barefoot with clothing made from straw, woven like a thick plaited basket.⁷³ Sabas the Younger always wears only a tunic, thus exposing himself to the sun in the summer and the cold in the winter.⁷⁴ In addition, the monks heightened their asceticism by refraining from washing. The *bios* of John Theristes notes that people are scandalized at the thought of a monk bathing.⁷⁵ The end result of this unwashed, unkempt life is that monks would often appear quite wild. When Bartholomew of Simeri is encountered by some people in the mountains, these people are frightened and run away because of his wild appearance. Bartholomew then has to convince them that he is a human being and does this by the way that he speaks to them.⁷⁶

From the *bioi*, it is clear that the Italo-Greek monks practice different forms of asceticism. Asceticism is seen to be key to their growth in Christian perfection, and there are a number of reasons found for this in the *bioi*. First of all, asceticism is followed in food, sleep and clothing in that the monks are allowed only the basic necessities of nature. The monk does not want to destroy the body, but to discipline it by giving it only what it actually needs. This understanding is well expressed in the *bios* of Neilos where the monastic Father John exhorts Neilos “to keep a just measure in the ascetic life, lest being distressed in any way by infirmity or old age, he ever be likely to seek that which is not fitting to the schema”.⁷⁷

The second reason given in the *bioi* for the monk to pursue the ascetical life is that asceticism enables a monk to subject the earthly to the spiritual.⁷⁸ A monk is to fight against the desires of the body, its drives, its uncontrolled desires, its passions, so that he can become able to control the body and check its uncontrolled impulses. The fundamental experience of these monks, as expressed in the *bioi*, is that the body and its desires often work against the desires of the spirit. To understand what the *bioi* mean by the burdens of the flesh, it is necessary to examine how monks speak of the body, and how they see the body becoming purified as a result of asceticism. The *bios* of Bartholomew of Simeri expresses this understanding when it states that Bartholomew “mortifies his flesh, subjecting the inferior to the superior, as reasonable, and purifies diligently the sight of his reason and the transparent mirror of the indwelling Holy Spirit”.⁷⁹

The third reason found for the severe asceticism practiced by these monks is the need to develop control over the passionate drives that are found within the human psyche. A monk must come to dominate these passions in order to establish a right order within himself, so that all the faculties of his soul, all that makes him a human being, can be properly subject to the spirit. The spiritual Father frequently helps his disciple to overcome the passions by offering practical advice. Neilos, for example, helps his disciple Stephen to overcome his constant struggle with sleep. Here Neilos makes a special stool for Stephen that has only one leg, so that every time Stephen falls asleep he falls over. Neilos requires Stephen to use this stool during prayer, in the Church temple, and in the dining room. In this way, Stephen overcomes his struggle with the passion of sloth.⁸⁰

The final goal of this ascetical struggle is to overcome the effects of the passions, and to reach a state of passionlessness. This state, as the *bios* of Philaretos describes it, involves a calming of “the agitated, distorted passions of the soul, inclinations and disturbances, and the wars and turbulence of the thoughts”.⁸¹ As a monk grows in passionlessness, he begins to sense less and less the drives and reactions of the passions. Philaretos of Seminara experiences this process in such a way that “his mind was always concentrated in himself and far from the senses”.⁸² His *bios* notes

that when dealing with people who are angry or impatient, Philaretos never becomes angry or impatient, but works to bring peace and calm.⁸³ The end result of this is that in a soul freed from the disturbance of the passions, a state of divine illumination follows. The *bios* of Neilos notes this when it speaks of Neilos possessing a mind purified of all passions and illuminated by divine light.⁸⁴

Vigilance

Closely associated with the need for asceticism is the need for a monk to develop two attitudes that help him in the ascetical monastic life: vigilance and detachment. In all the *bioi*, the monk is always expected to display an attitude of vigilance. This attitude of careful watchfulness is to encompass all that a monk does. It is centered upon a concern to be on one's guard against temptations, recognizing both when they come and how they come. Neilos suffers much from temptations because his newly begun monastic life is such a change from his previous way of life.⁸⁵ The major source of these temptations, as stated over and over in the *bioi*, are demons, especially the devil. In the *bios* of Elias the Speleot, it is the devil who is seen to make the saint long for his family.⁸⁶ In other *bioi*, it is demons who are seen to cause visions and apparitions. In that of Sabas, it is the devil who is blamed for sending the Saracens to molest the monks.⁸⁷

It is the role of the spiritual Father to encourage and to teach his disciples to be vigilant and to resist these temptations. The *bios* of Elias the Speleot states that Elias struggles against many demons, but notes that he arms himself and his disciples with the sign of the cross and with prayers.⁸⁸ These spiritual Fathers teach their disciples how to resist these temptations. The *bios* of Neilos is very explicit in the instructions that Neilos gives to his monks. Neilos walks around his monks, as he knows that they are going to be attacked by the devil, "telling and exhorting them to pray always and to chase away the opponent by the name of Jesus".⁸⁹

In addition to the vigilance needed to face temptations, there is also the vigilance monks must have in order to face and endure the various hardships and trials that monastic life itself brings to the monks. Spiritual Fathers frequently encourage their disciples to be vigilant in facing tribulations and to accept these with patience, steadfastness and tolerance. The *bios* of Elias the Younger even develops a theory on why tribulations and suffering are found in the monastic life. Elias the Younger tells his monks that one must learn to tolerate difficulties in life because God sends trials and tribulations for two reasons, "either to prove our tolerance, if we support them nobly, or to lead us to repentance and temperance, so that, that which we did not want to correct while living in tranquility, we might correct because we are taught by affliction".⁹⁰

Detachment

In addition to a state of careful vigilance, there is a second attitude that a monk needs to foster in order to bear fruit in asceticism. This is an attitude of detachment. This attitude manifests itself in two particular ways in the *bioi*: a monk is to be a stranger to this earth and all that is in it, and a monk is to seek always after silence. Detachment from this world is expressed in various ways. When Neilos begins the monastic life, one of his former servants comes to him to encourage him in his new way of life. When Neilos asks him why he does not join him in the monastic life, the servant responds that he cannot afford the cloak and tunic that a monk must wear. Neilos' response is to take off his own cloak and give it immediately to the man.⁹¹ From this point on, Neilos only wears a sheepskin for his cloak. He possesses no money during his life, and when he is about to die, he gives his monks his inheritance, a few rags, his only earthly possessions.⁹² Neilos also teaches detachment to his disciples. He tells his disciple Stephen to give his Psalter to an elderly monk who had misplaced his own.⁹³ He later refuses a gift of money from the strategos of the Theme of Calabria, as well as his offer to build the monks a large oratory in place of their small mud church.⁹⁴ Finally, he even gives a robber the monastery's horse. The man steals the horse, but when he hears that it belongs to Neilos, he becomes fearful and returns it immediately. When he begs Neilos for pardon, Neilos gives him the horse, and tells his rather dissatisfied monks, that he did this because "the deprivation of material things in any way is a taking away of sins".⁹⁵

It is, however, not only from material goods that monks must demonstrate an attitude of detachment, but even from their very existence on earth. The model that the monks hold up before themselves is that of the pilgrim, a pilgrim who belongs to no place on the earth. The clearest expression of this model is found in the *bios* of Neilos. Before his death, Neilos tells his monks to bury him in the earth so that strangers can walk on his grave. He requests this because he notes that he has been a foreigner all the days of his life.⁹⁶ Prior to this, Neilos abandons his homeland of Calabria and travels north into the territory of the Latins so that he could flee from all human glory and recognition.⁹⁷

The *bioi* mention two factors that tend to heighten the awareness of the monks as being wanderers on the earth. The first is the desire of monks to visit shrines and holy places, and the second is the need for monks to move because of the political and economic instability of the time. Elias the Speleot goes at the end of his life to visit the home of Elias the Younger, who is "of the same name, of the same way of life, and a genuine friend".⁹⁸ At a time of turmoil Neilos goes off to the cathedral of Rossano to honor with tears the icon of the Theotokos, and ask for her guidance and protection.⁹⁹ Other monks travel even greater distances. Several of the monks travel to visit Rome. Christopher goes to Rome to

venerate the relics of the Holy Apostles and many other holy martyrs.¹⁰⁰ Leo-Luke, when he decides to become a monk, first goes to Rome to pay homage to the relics of Saints Peter and Paul, where “with the maceration of many tears and with contrition of heart, he devoutly proceeded to Rome, and before the tomb of the most blessed Apostles satisfied his mind with tearful prayers”.¹⁰¹ Other monks even travel greater distances, as for example, Elias the Younger who goes to Jerusalem, the monastery of Saint Catherine on Mount Sinai, and finally dies on his way to Constantinople, where he has been summoned by the emperor, Leo VI.¹⁰²

The second factor that increases the mobility of the Italo-Greek monks is the instability of the times. This instability is seen primarily in the need to flee from invaders. The *bioi* constantly mention invasions by the Saracens. They speak of the Saracens attacking and of the Fathers having to flee from their caves.¹⁰³ The *bios* of St Sabas mentions that the nation of the Ismaelites marched against those who dwelled in Calabria and that the entire theme of Calabria became deserted, along with all the monks in the territory.¹⁰⁴ Monks also had to flee from Germanic invaders, the worst of whom, the *bios* of Luke of Demena notes, is Otto the Great, “a ferocious man who came into Italy from the transalpine nations, to plunder and atrociously take the cities of the Greeks by assault”.¹⁰⁵

The search for solitude

Monks consider solitude to be their ideal, a solitude which calls them to be far removed from all human discourse and attachments. The *bioi* frequently speak of the monk who wanders into a deserted place, a mountain or cave, in whom “a burning longing seizes him for the solitary life”.¹⁰⁶ In fact, this desire for solitude and silence is seen in Philaretos to be such that he “kept such a tenacious hold of silence, that he was not able to be addressed by either family members or friends with whom he dwelled, at which they all were greatly astonished”.¹⁰⁷ Spiritual Fathers even abandon their disciples to find solitude. Christopher, before his pilgrimage to Rome, gives over direction of his monks to his son Sabas, and upon his return, becomes an ever greater recluse, living in silence in his cell.¹⁰⁸ Bartholomew of Simeri is about to do the same, when he receives a vision that stops him.¹⁰⁹ John Theristes, while not totally abandoning the common life, has a cave, not far from his monastery where he regularly separates himself from his monks to pray in solitude.¹¹⁰

This desire for silence and solitude offers a kind of balance to the frequent wanderings of the Italo-Greek monks. The *bios* of Leo-Luke presents the saint, asking a woman where he can find salvation. Her response is: “My son, you will not be able to be saved wandering about and changing from place to place; if you desire to come to the true quiet of salvation plant yourself immediately in some cenobitic religious congregation.”¹¹¹ The monks of Nikodemos come to him asking to move to

a less difficult place. Nikodemos, knowing that this will lead to many temptations, takes his monks to a place on a feast day. When they arrive at the church, the monks find such a large crowd of people there for the feast day that they beg him to take them back to their former dwelling place as they recalled the quiet and blessed way of life that they had abandoned.¹¹²

Prayer

In the active way of monastic perfection presented in the *bioi*, there is a strong emphasis on the role of prayer, both private and liturgical, as being central to the way of monastic perfection. Prayer is seen to be so important that asceticism, vigilance and detachment are considered to be insufficient in themselves as the means to perfection without prayer. Prayer is seen to be connected to all the events of daily life. Elias the Younger is noted for praying both before sleep and after sleep, and gradually lengthening his times of prayer until he came to pray always.¹¹³ Sabas the Younger, after learning that the oil used in the church has run out, goes into the church temple and prays until the container for the oil is filled.¹¹⁴ Christopher, praying with his two sons, Sabas and Makarios, asks for a sign of God's philanthropy and compassion so that he may know where he and his monks should live.¹¹⁵

In the *bioi* the most frequently mentioned form of prayer is that of the repetition of verses from the Psalms. For some monks, this means recitation of the entire Psalter each day, as is noted of Luke of Taormina, who does not leave his cell each day until he has finished the entire Psalter.¹¹⁶ For other monks, it means the use of different Psalms throughout the day. When Bartholomew of Simeri is alone in his cave, he "persisted obstinately in prayer and fasting, delighting in the hallowed melodies of holy David".¹¹⁷ Another important use of the Psalms is to provide a ready form of prayer to match an event that happens in life. Luke of Demena, for example, at the time of a Saracen attack, prays the Psalm which says: "God arises and his enemies are scattered. All who hate him, flee from before his face."¹¹⁸ Neilos, during the attack by a demon, prays, "saying 'O God, attend to my help; Lord, hasten to help me. May those seeking my soul feel shame and be shamed'".¹¹⁹

In addition to personal, individual prayer, the *bioi* also place a strong emphasis on the importance of liturgical prayer. It is noted, for example, for Gregory of Cassano – one of the few Italo-Greek monks ordained a presbyter – that many people come to him and that in the Divine Liturgy, he "satisfies them all with his preaching and renews them fully by the heavenly Bread".¹²⁰ During the Liturgy, it is noted that Elias the Speleot stood for all the offices and "became greatly mute with contemplation, and was taken out of himself, so that thereafter his eyes entered into their depths from the beginning until its end".¹²¹ One of the clearest indications of the

importance of the Divine Liturgy for Italo-Greek monasticism is found in the number of miracles in the *bioi* that are connected to the materials needed for the Liturgy. Elias the Speleot changes water into wine for the needs of the Liturgy.¹²² Bartholomew of Simeri tells his monks to pray for bread when the monastery runs out of bread for the Liturgy and, surely enough, someone comes offering bread to the monks.¹²³

There are also miracles found in the *bioi* that take place during the Divine Liturgy. In the *bios* of Elias the Younger, a dove is seen flying over the head of the bishop Pantoleon during the Liturgy.¹²⁴ In that of Elias the Speleot, various miraculous occurrences are connected to the presbyter Arsenios as he serves the Liturgy: his face is illumined; he is surrounded by a spiritual fire; three times he is prevented by an angel from praying for a merchant who refused to stop dealing in the slave trade.¹²⁵ It is with this same presbyter that Elias the Speleot, when Arsenios tells him that he cannot perform miracles like the Speleot and that he is nothing in comparison to him, that Elias tells him that he has a far greater gift of the priesthood, and this is confirmed during the Liturgy when Arsenios is surrounded by a spiritual fire.¹²⁶

Work

The final component of the active way of monastic perfection is seen in the need for monks to be involved in work, either physical or mental. Monks like Elias the Speleot, Neilos the Younger, Gregory of Cassano and Bartholomew the Younger work at calligraphy.¹²⁷ Philaretos of Seminara and Gregory of Cassano are noted for their work as farmers.¹²⁸ Bartholomew the Younger uses part of every day for the composition of hymns in honor of the Mother of God and the saints.¹²⁹ An image that is used in some of the *bioi* to demonstrate the importance of labor is that of the bee. A monk is expected to be as industrious in his spiritual and physical labor as is the bee. This comparison of the monks' industry to that of the bee is particularly emphasized in the *bioi* of Sabas, Makarios and Christopher. Christopher is described as modeling his love for work on that of the bee.¹³⁰ Christopher's wife Kale, being inspired by the example of her husband and sons, also begins the monastic life, where she draws many other women to join her. Because of the many people who come to her and her husband, the *bios* presents their monasteries as being like beehives, with the monks' work of virtue compared to the busy activity of bees.¹³¹

The passive way of monastic perfection

In addition to the emphasis that the *bioi* of the Italo-Greek monks place on action that leads to monastic perfection, there is a second component, a passive one, which is seen to be as important as the active one.

The importance of this passive way is founded upon the radical recognition that human effort on its own is insufficient for the attainment of Christian perfection. In several of the *bioi*, there are accounts of monks who have to struggle for many years with great temptations or strong passions. Neilos, for example, experiences this three times in the earlier years of his monastic life. First when he is on his way to become a monk, he meets a Saracen who tries to convince him to wait until old age to become a monk. Neilos rejects this as a temptation, stating "I want to serve God now in my youth so that I may be glorified by him in my old age".¹³² But after saying this, Neilos is afraid that the Saracen will harm him. When the Saracen, in fact, offers to help him, Neilos realizes that this experience is a profound lesson in the insufficiency of human power. Neilos's second experience occurs when he is gravely ill. Neilos realizes that his illness is beyond human help, and that he needs to depend solely on God. When he accepts his human weakness with patience and the need to depend solely on God's generosity, he is then cured of the disease.¹³³ The third experience of human insufficiency occurs when Neilos is severely tempted by thoughts about a woman whom he sees in Rome, in the church of Saint Peter. Neilos cannot get the image of the woman out of his mind through his own efforts. It is when Neilos prays before a cross, confessing his weakness, that he is blessed three times by Christ from the cross and freed from these impure thoughts.¹³⁴

Humility

In the *bioi*, it is understood that the foundation for God's divine action is the humble recognition of human weakness and impotence. Neilos, for example, always professes his humility and counts himself as the last of the brothers.¹³⁵ When Elias the Speleot goes to meet Elias the Younger, he refuses to enter the monastery or to eat the food given him, professing that he is not worthy to do so.¹³⁶ Philaretos states that it is absurd for a monk to show pride, since the monastic *schema* shows the opposite. Philaretos states that the monastic cloak speaks of tears, the scapular of carrying the cross, the *koukoullion* (the monk's hat) of the body in the tomb, and the tonsure of a stripping away or contempt for all the things that are in the world. Thus, in every aspect of life, a monk must be humble.¹³⁷

Divine Providence

An important aspect of the acknowledgement of human weakness and the need for God's help and grace is found in the strong emphasis that the *bioi* place on the importance of divine providence and the need to trust in it. When John Theristes is sent off by his mother to go to Calabria, he is told by her to cast his care onto the Lord who will sustain him in

his new life situation. Shortly after this when he arrives at the seaside he is about to be captured by some Saracens. John raises a small cross that his mother had given him at his departure, and the Saracens go away.¹³⁸ When a monk visits Elias the Speleot in Rome, he is surprised by Elias's extreme poverty and asceticism. He asks Elias for some food, and Elias shows him a small piece of bread, noting that the Lord never abandons those who follow him.¹³⁹ When Neilos comes face to face with a Saracen, his fear is very great. The Saracen, however, chides him for his fear and even gives him some bread to eat. Neilos takes the bread but, as the *bios* notes, he is ashamed to raise his eyes to heaven because he realizes that God can even show his providence through a Saracen.¹⁴⁰ Neilos also experiences a greater example of God's providence when he is traveling and slips on a fallen tree, hurting himself so badly that he believes that he is about to die. To prepare for death, he takes out a small New Testament that he always carries with him and at that point an angel appears to him, offering him something like honey to eat, which enables him to get up and continue on his way.¹⁴¹

Spiritual maturity and its results

One of the results of the gradual transformation that takes place in a monk as he is being perfected is that he may become a spiritual Father for other monks. For apprentice monks who have been intently living the active and passive ways to perfection under the guidance of spiritual Fathers, there are certain marks of spiritual perfection and maturity that gradually come to be noted in the more perfect of their brethren. These gifts and signs recall the beginning of this chapter because, as the apprentice monk grows in perfection and receives divine gifts, he becomes more and more like his spiritual Father, and may eventually even become a spiritual Father for others. Thus what is seen in the lives of some of the more perfect apprentices is a full circle in which some monks now become spiritual Fathers to other apprentices. A major focus of each *bios* is to show gradual growth of the great spiritual Father from apprentice to spiritual paternity and service as a Father for others.

A monk is described in the *bios* of Bartholomew the Younger as "expecting growth each day in a stature that is of God, hoping to attain to the measure of the stature of Christ."¹⁴² The *bios* of Philaretos of Seminara offers one of the fullest descriptions of the change that takes place in a monk like Philaretos as he lives in solitude in deserted places. This change is described stating that Philaretos purged all the "agitated movements, desires, and disturbances of the soul, the wars and seditions of thoughts, the unbridled license of human nature, and at length whatever crooked or evil befell the wretched and unhappy race of mortals from the beginning".¹⁴³ Elias the Speleot, at the end of his life, has a vision of a column extending from earth to heaven. This column is understood to

be like the ladder from heaven that Jacob saw in the Old Testament, of which the steps are described in the *bios* as the virtues which ascended in his heart.¹⁴⁴

This life of virtue is frequently called the angelic life in the *bioi*. As a monk grows in virtue he is said to become like the angels and to take on what are considered to be the characteristics of the angels. The *bioi* present various ways in which this is seen in the life of a monk. Bartholomew the Younger is noted for having angelic ever-watchfulness and is described as consuming himself in nightly vigils that contend with the vigils of the angels.¹⁴⁵ The *bios* of Neilos emphasizes the monastic life as an angelic way of praise. Taking a phrase from the anaphora of the Divine Liturgy, the *bios* states: "A monk is an angel; his work is mercy, peace, a sacrifice of praise."¹⁴⁶ Neilos explains this by noting that a monk is to have the same sense of dedication to God as do the angels. He states that a monk is directed either fully towards God or fully away from God, becoming either an angel or a devil.¹⁴⁷

Signs of monastic perfection

As the monks presented in the *bioi* progress in ever greater perfection, there are certain signs, as well as gifts, that are manifested in them, because of the spiritual renewal taking place in them. These are both physical as well as spiritual signs. Many of the *bioi* speak of a light or fire radiating from the bodies of very holy monks. The *bioi* of Elias the Speleot and of Bartholomew of Simeri speak of columns of fire coming forth from the bodies of monks in prayer.¹⁴⁸ The *bios* of Elias the Speleot describes this illumination on the face of Elias as a showing forth of the divine light that comes from the depths of his soul through his body.¹⁴⁹ The *bios* of Bitalios notes that this illumination is seen not only by believers, but that it is so clearly manifested that it even frightens away the Saracens who come to occupy Bitalios's monastery.¹⁵⁰

The *bioi* also note that the bodies of these spiritual Fathers even give forth pleasant fragrances. The *bios* of Elias the Speleot states that when the priest Arsenios is asked to go swimming with a bishop, Arsenios first blesses the water with the sign of the cross and, after going in, leaves the water filled with a fragrance.¹⁵¹ Sabas the Younger is also noted for the aromatic fragrance that filled the air around him.¹⁵² For most of the monks, however, these sweet fragrances come forth from their bodies only after death. When Philaretos, for example, is to be buried his body gives forth a pleasant fragrance of which it is noted that it surpasses every kind of perfume.¹⁵³ The body of Luke of Taormina is noted for giving forth "a kind of bubbling fountain of ever-flowing divine myrrh".¹⁵⁴

In addition to these physical signs, there are also spiritual signs and spiritual gifts that are seen in the lives of these monks as they progress in spiritual perfection. These are the gifts needed for spiritual paternity.

A number of these spiritual Fathers have visions. The *bioi* frequently note that these visions are given in connection to a particular phase of the life or mission of the monk. Elias the Younger is given three visions: one to go to North Africa to fulfill a mission; one in which he receives special thaumaturgical powers; and the final one in which he is told to return to his homeland and is even shown the mountain "on which he is to build his ascetical palaestra".¹⁵⁵ Bartholomew of Simeri is given a vision of the Mother of God who tells him that he is no longer to live as a hermit, but to gather together an assembly of monks who are to become worthy of salvation through his direction.¹⁵⁶ Some of these Fathers even appear to their followers after death. Bitalios appears to some people of the city of Turris to assure them that it pleases him that his relics have been placed with those of Luke of Demena in another city.¹⁵⁷ In the *bios* of Bartholomew the Younger there is a vision given to a monk who is very sick and near death, in which Bartholomew comes to him surrounded by a great crowd of the poor. The monk revives and tells his fellow monks at Grottaferrata that Bartholomew had come in a vision to tell his monks that they are to remain in the tradition that he had given to them, by remaining steadfast in virtue and good works.¹⁵⁸

In addition to these various manifestations of spiritual perfection, there is another area in the lives of the great spiritual Fathers that indicates their spiritual maturity. This is the new relationship they can form with nature and with people. The new relationship of these monks with nature is seen to be like a return to paradise, where animals and the forces of nature are all at the service of humanity. Sabas the Younger is seen to have a special relationship with the natural elements. During the threat of a flood, for example, he gathers his monks around him and prays for the rain to stop, so that the place of their service to God will not be destroyed. As the monks pray, some wood flows together and changes the course of the river.¹⁵⁹ Other monks have a special rapport with animals. In the *bios* of Bitalios it is noted that the animals of his region come to him to receive his blessing and be obedient to him. Once, for example, he orders a doe to stand still so that some thirsty monks could drink her milk.¹⁶⁰ When a bear comes to destroy the garden of Christopher's monastery, Christopher orders the bear to leave; the *bios* notes that it seems that the bear understands exactly what the saint is saying.¹⁶¹ Other *bioi* will also speak of the hostile elements of nature being inferior to the power of spiritual Fathers. In many accounts these are seen in snakes or scorpions. Both in the *bios* of Leo-Luke and in the *bios* of Bitalios, there are accounts in which these Fathers are bitten by snakes but live unharmed. Leo-Luke trusts in divine help, and Bitalios is cured when he makes the sign of the cross over the snakebite.¹⁶² Nikodemos of Kellarana is bitten by a scorpion, but is not harmed. After this, as noted in the *bios*, he chides the scorpion asking what was his advantage in biting him, since he was not able to harm him, and then he sends the scorpion away,

forbidding anyone to kill it.¹⁶³ The perfected monk is to live in harmony with all forms of nature.

Relationships with people are another area in the lives of the Italo-Greek spiritual Fathers that manifest the change in a monk as he grows in spiritual maturity. This change in relationship is initially seen in the beginnings of the monastic life of each monk in his departure from family and homeland to find a spiritual Father. This new spiritual relationship between a spiritual father and an apprentice monk is meant to replace any and all family relationships in its importance. Two striking examples of this radical separation from family are seen in the *bios* of Neilos the Younger. When Neilos is young, he falls in love and has a child. While suffering from a high fever in which he has a vision of death and eternal torment, Neilos experiences a conversion and decides to become a monk. He leaves all his connections with family and goes off alone to become a monk.¹⁶⁴ Later Neilos is joined in his monastery by his nephew. Because of an act of irreverence, when his nephew and some companions find a Holy Cup and all drink water from it at a well, Neilos reproaches his nephew severely and then refuses to speak to him; even when the boy falls sick and is dying because of Neilos' reproach, Neilos refuses to go to him. For Neilos, who internally suffers greatly because of this separation, it is more important to reject familial relationships, in order to bring to the boy a spiritual correction and a preparation for God's mercy.¹⁶⁵

In some of the *bioi*, however, there are examples of familial relationships. The monastic family of Christopher, Kale and their two sons is a prime example of this new kind of spiritual familial relationship. Christopher leaves his wife and young children to become a monk. Eventually he is followed by his sons, who also inspire their mother, so that they all become monks.¹⁶⁶ The parents of Bartholomew of Simeri come to him to become monks. In this *bios* there is a clear explanation of what this new spiritual familial relationship is seen to be. The *bios* states that Bartholomew's parents turned away from the vanity of the world and, reversing the roles of nature, have Bartholomew begetting them according to the spirit, even though they were the ones who had given birth to him in the flesh.¹⁶⁷ Thus natural relationships are unimportant in the light of the spirit. It is spiritual paternity, and not natural paternity or relationship, that is important for the monks.

Besides these new relationships among monks, the *bioi* also note that the spiritual Fathers have different types of relationship with all people in society, rich or poor, powerful or weak. In a sense, expected social relationships are set aside by the monks. The monks are noted to have a sense of boldness and confidence before all levels of society, and even before God. Bartholomew of Simeri is noted, because of the purity of his soul, to be one who had boldness before God.¹⁶⁸ There are many examples of Italo-Greek spiritual Fathers who display great boldness, particularly in the defense of justice for the poor and the oppressed. These Fathers

stand up before local Byzantine officials, officials in Constantinople, even the emperor himself, church officials, foreign kings and even Saracens. A good example of this is found when Elias the Younger defends a man named Kolombos, who had led a revolt against the strategos of Calabria. The strategos captures him and wants to have him executed. Elias intercedes and asks for mercy. When the strategos refuses to listen, he soon falls ill and dies, crying out for the help of Elias. Elias then makes Kolombos his own special case, and when Elias is called to Constantinople he takes Kolombos with him so that he can have him pardoned by the emperor.¹⁶⁹ Neilos of Rossano does the same when the citizens of Rossano revolt against the Byzantine magistros, Nikephoros, by burning the ships that they are supposed to supply him. Neilos comes to the defense of the people and boldly defends them before Nikephoros. The *bios* makes a special point to note that the magistros agrees to Neilos's request for pardon for the people because he knows that Neilos is respected by the emperor.¹⁷⁰ The *bios* of Neilos states that he has a boldness which "fears no patriarch, not even him, the emperor, who causes fear to all".¹⁷¹

This boldness, as presented in the *bioi*, is founded upon a radical trust in God and a profound sense of the unimportance of the earthly in the face of the eternal. This is seen, for example, in the attack that the spiritual Father, Luke of Demena, leads against the Saracens. Usually monks would flee at the first indication of the arrival of the Saracens, but Luke is different. When he learns that the Saracens are sacking the area, taking captives and even destroying the churches, he leads his strongest monks out to attack them. The *bios* notes that Luke and his monks go forth armed only with the sign of the cross, but when the Saracens see the brightness encircling them and the blaze flashing forth from their faces, they flee in terror.¹⁷² The same sense of boldness, based on confidence in God, is seen in the visits that these spiritual Fathers make to local nobility, noted for their cruelty, to intercede for those whose rights had been violated. Neilos, for example, goes off to a count who had abducted a woman who was working for the monastery where Neilos was living. Neilos warns him to release her, and when he refuses to listen to him, after being warned that divine justice will fall upon him, he dies shortly thereafter.¹⁷³ On another occasion, Neilos becomes involved with a pope, an antipope and the German king. Neilos writes to Philagathos, a Calabrian, who is elected as an antipope in Rome, telling him to abandon false glory and return to the monastic state. When he refuses, he is eventually taken prisoner by the German king, Otto III, who reinstates the rightful pope, Gregory V. Gregory, then takes out revenge on Philagathos by mutilating and imprisoning him. Neilos decided that he must intervene and goes to Rome where he is well received by both the king and pope. Neilos intercedes for Philagathos, but Gregory refuses to free him and mocks him even more. At this Neilos prophesies that both king and pope will suffer the same fate as the antipope and then he leaves Rome.¹⁷⁴

This sense of boldness that Neilos demonstrates is one that challenges all injustice and is seen to be a gift from God to the spiritual Father to proclaim the justice of God in all the affairs of society.

Conclusion

With the gradual transformation of a monk into a spiritual Father, the full circle of growth in spiritual maturity is complete. This process began with a novice monk becoming an apprentice to a spiritual Father, following his example on the path of growth in perfection through the active and passive ways that lead to spiritual maturity. As the disciple grows in perfection, he gradually received various gifts, which serve as signs of his transformation. Gradually some of these monks then become spiritual Fathers for other disciples who are to follow the same path in obedience to a spiritual Father. A good description of the growth that takes place in this passage from discipleship to spiritual paternity is found in the *bios* of Bartholomew the Younger, which states that the spiritual Father is “the light on the lamp-stand”.¹⁷⁵ The apprentice monk is to take the light that his spiritual Father shines upon him, thus illuminating his way as he walks according to it, until he gradually himself becomes the light that he can then offer to others.¹⁷⁶

Notes

- 1 Life of St Elias the Speleot, 4–6.
- 2 Life of St Sabas, 3.
- 3 Life of St John Theristes, 3.
- 4 Life of St Philaretos, 16.
- 5 Life of St Bartholomew of Simeri, 6.
- 6 Life of Sts Christopher and Makarios, 2.
- 7 Life of St Neilos, 3–4.
- 8 *Ibid.*, 8.
- 9 Life of St Elias the Speleot, 6.
- 10 Life of St Bartholomew of Simeri, 23, 6.
- 11 Life of St Philaretos, 37.
- 12 Life of St Elias the Speleot, 41. Cf. Mt. 10:37.
- 13 Life of St Philaretos, 38.
- 14 Life of St Neilos, 44, 97.
- 15 Life of St Elias the Younger, 35.
- 16 Life of St Neilos, 4.
- 17 Life of St John Theristes, 3.
- 18 Life of St Philaretos, 40. Cf. Rom. 8:18.
- 19 Life of St Elias the Speleot, 16.
- 20 Life of St Elias the Younger, 20.
- 21 Life of Sts Christopher and Makarios, 3.
- 22 *Ibid.*
- 23 Life of St Elias the Speleot, 13.
- 24 Life of St Neilos, 4.
- 25 Life of St Luke of Demena, 3: Sese ad sapientissimi praeceptoris mores conformandi.

- 26 Life of St Elias the Speleot, 31.
- 27 Life of St Neilos, 27.
- 28 *Ibid.*, 30.
- 29 *Ibid.*, 94.
- 30 Life of St Bartholomew the Younger, 5.
- 31 Life of St Elias the Younger, 34.
- 32 Life of St Neilos, 78.
- 33 *Ibid.*, 84.
- 34 Life of Sts Christopher and Makarios, 1.
- 35 *Ibid.*, 11.
- 36 Life of St Elias the Younger, 34.
- 37 *Ibid.*, 76.
- 38 Life of St Bartholomew the Younger, 1.
- 39 Life of St Bartholomew of Simeri, 27.
- 40 Life of St Neilos, 43.
- 41 Life of St Elias the Speleot, 65.
- 42 Life of St Neilos, 89–91.
- 43 *Ibid.*, 36–7.
- 44 Life of St Sabas, 51.
- 45 Life of St Neilos, 100.
- 46 Life of St Elias the Speleot, 52.
- 47 Life of St Neilos, 10.
- 48 *Ibid.*, 31.
- 49 *Ibid.*, 45.
- 50 Life of St Elias the Younger, 40.
- 51 Life of St Sabas, 4.
- 52 Life of St Neilos, 38.
- 53 *Ibid.*, 82.
- 54 Life of St Elias the Younger, 34.
- 55 Life of St Bitalios, 9.
- 56 Life of St Neilos, 11–13.
- 57 Life of Sts Christopher and Makarios, 22.
- 58 Life of St Elias the Speleot, 13.
- 59 Life of St Elias the Speleot, 37. Cf. Matthew 11:12.
- 60 Life of Sts Christopher and Makarios, 1.
- 61 Life of St Philaretos, 20: Palaestrita cum suo adversario pugnat.
- 62 Life of St Sabas, 8.
- 63 Life of St Elias the Younger, 53.
- 64 Life of St Nikodemos, 5.
- 65 Life of St Elias the Younger, 53.
- 66 Life of Sts Christopher and Makarios, 4.
- 67 Life of St Elias the Speleot, 71.
- 68 Life of St Bitalios, 4.
- 69 Life of Sts Christopher and Makarios, 4.
- 70 Life of St Elias the Speleot, 71.
- 71 Life of St Bartholomew the Younger, 5.
- 72 Life of St Bartholomew of Simeri, 8.
- 73 Life of St Philaretos, 36.
- 74 Life of St Sabas, 8.
- 75 Life of St John Theristes, 6.
- 76 Life of St Bartholomew of Simeri, 14.
- 77 Life of St Neilos, 11.
- 78 Life of St Sabas, 1.

- 79 Life of St Bartholomew of Simeri, 11.
- 80 Life of St Neilos, 27.
- 81 Life of St Philaretos, 32: Turbulentos animi notus pravasque libidines ac perturbationes, cogitationum bella ac seditions.
- 82 *Ibid.*, 42: Mente semper in se collecta et a sensibus abstracta.
- 83 *Ibid.*
- 84 Life of St Neilos, 78.
- 85 *Ibid.*, 9.
- 86 Life of St Elias the Speleot, 11.
- 87 Life of St Sabas, 5.
- 88 Life of St Elias the Speleot, 44.
- 89 Life of St Neilos, 43.
- 90 Life of St Elias the Younger, 44.
- 91 Life of St Neilos, 9.
- 92 *Ibid.*, 97.
- 93 *Ibid.*, 31.
- 94 *Ibid.*, 71–2.
- 95 *Ibid.*, 83.
- 96 *Ibid.*, 97.
- 97 Life of St Neilos, 72.
- 98 Life of St Elias the Speleot, 76.
- 99 Life of St Neilos, 41.
- 100 Life of Sts Christopher and Makarios, 14.
- 101 Life of St Leo-Luke, 6: Cum multa ieiuniorum maceratione, ac cordis contritione Roman devotus petiit, atque ante beatissimorum Apostolorum sepulchra, mentis suae lacrymosis precibus satisfacit.
- 102 Life of St Elias the Younger, 18–19, 69.
- 103 Life of St Neilos, 36.
- 104 Life of St Sabas, 45.
- 105 Life of St Luke of Demena, 8: Ferox quidam ex Transalpinis nationibus in Italiam venit, ut diriperet, atrociterque Graecorum urbes expugnaret.
- 106 Life of St Sabas, 2.
- 107 Life of St Philaretos, 37: Silentii adeo tenax erat, ut neque a domesticis ac familiaribus, cum quibus versabatur, conveniri posset, idque vehementer omnes admirarentur.
- 108 Life of Sts Christopher and Makarios, 3.
- 109 Life of St Bartholomew of Simeri, 18.
- 110 Life of St John Theristes, 6.
- 111 Life of St Leo-Luke, 5: Non petereis, inquit, fili mi, salvari pervagando, ac de loco ad locum migrando; sed si veram salutis quietem invenire desideras . . . continuo alicuius coenobii religiosae congregationi te inseras.
- 112 Life of St Nikodemos, 9.
- 113 Life of St Elias the Younger, 4.
- 114 Life of St Sabas, 38.
- 115 Life of Sts Christopher and Makarios, 10.
- 116 Life of St Luke of Taormina, 200.
- 117 Life of St Bartholomew of Simeri, 10.
- 118 Life of St Luke of Demena, 10: Exsurgat Deus, et dissipentur omnes inimici ejus, et fugiant, qui oderunt eum, a facie ejus. Cf. Ps. 67:2.
- 119 Life of St Neilos, 23. Cf. Ps. 69, 2–3.
- 120 Life of St Gregory of Cassano, Prior, 10. Quibus omnibus in predicatione satisfaciens et caelesti pane admodum eos reficiens.
- 121 Life of St Elias the Speleot, 45.

- 122 *Ibid.*, 46.
- 123 Life of St Bartholomew of Simeri, 17.
- 124 Life of St Elias the Younger, 16.
- 125 Life of Elias the Speleot, 17, 32, 19.
- 126 *Ibid.*, 31–2.
- 127 Life of St Elias the Speleot, 44; Life of St Neilos, 9 and 18; Life of St Gregory of Cassano, Prior, 4; Life of St Bartholomew the Younger, 17.
- 128 Life of St Philaretos, 37; Life of St Gregory of Cassano, Prior, 4.
- 129 Life of St Bartholomew the Younger, 7.
- 130 Life of Sts Christopher and Makarios, 3.
- 131 Life of Sts Christopher and Makarios, 7.
- 132 Life of St Neilos, 6.
- 133 *Ibid.*, 22.
- 134 *Ibid.*, 19.
- 135 *Ibid.*, 40.
- 136 Life of St Elias the Speleot, 36.
- 137 Life of St Philaretos, 38.
- 138 Life of St John Theristes, 2–3.
- 139 Life of St Elias the Speleot, 11.
- 140 Life of St Neilos, 7.
- 141 *Ibid.*, 63.
- 142 Life of St Bartholomew the Younger, 1. Cf. Eph. 4:13–14.
- 143 Life of St Philaretos, 32: Turbulentos animi motus pravasque libidines ac perturbationes, cogitationum bella ac seditiones effrenem humanae naturae licentiam ac demum quidquid pravi malique misero atque infelici mortalium generi a principio evenit.
- 144 Life of St Elias the Speleot, 73.
- 145 Life of St Bartholomew the Younger, 17.
- 146 Life of St Neilos, 74.
- 147 *Ibid.*, 75.
- 148 Life of St Elias the Speleot, 18. Life of St Bartholomew of Simeri, 13 and 35.
- 149 Life of St Elias the Speleot, 70.
- 150 Life of St Bitalios, 14.
- 151 Life of St Elias the Speleot, 26.
- 152 Life of St Sabas, 4.
- 153 Life of St Philaretos, 50.
- 154 Life of St Luke of Taormina, 200.
- 155 Life of St Elias the Younger, 22.
- 156 Life of St Bartholomew of Simeri, 18.
- 157 Life of St Bitalios, 25.
- 158 Life of St Bartholomew the Younger, 20.
- 159 Life of St Sabas, 13.
- 160 Life of St Bitalios, 7.
- 161 Life of Sts Christopher and Makarios, 15.
- 162 Life of St Leo-Luke, 10. Life of St Bitalios, 3.
- 163 Life of St Nikodemos, 10.
- 164 Life of St Neilos, 3–4.
- 165 *Ibid.*, 82.
- 166 Life of St Sabas, 2. Life of Sts Christopher and Makarios, 2, 3, 7.
- 167 Life of St Bartholomew of Simeri, 23.
- 168 Life of St Bartholomew of Simeri, 17.
- 169 Life of St Elias the Younger, 64–6.
- 170 Life of St Neilos, 60–2.

171 *Ibid.*, 64.

172 Like of St Luke of Demena, 10.

173 Life of St Neilos, 9.

174 *Ibid.*, 89–93.

175 Life of St Bartholomew the Younger, 7.

176 For a more detailed presentation of the monastic spirituality of the Italo-Greek monks see Hester 1992.

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2 Italo-Greek monastic *Typika**

Cristina Torre

The questions related to the study of Byzantine monastic *typika* generally speaking and of the Italo-Greek ones in particular are wide and complex, starting from their definition and classification. Not every document known as such shows the same features, some of which are however often found in documents that go by other terms: *diathiki*, *hypotyposis*, *diatyposis*, *thesmos*, *diataxis*, *hypomnima*.¹ Not even the distinction between liturgical and monastic *typika* seems to be fully adequate, since the latter often also contain indications regarding the liturgy, as much as the name of *typika ktetorika*, referring to the founders's *typika* written by the monastery's founder or refounder, cannot be assigned to every known document.²

Typika are therefore texts that escape any rigid classification. This chapter will refer generally to monastic *typika*, focusing in particular on the disciplinary rules therein. The sources examined include the *typika* from the monasteries of St John the Forerunner in Pantelleria,³ St Savior in Messina,⁴ the Theotokos Nea Hodigitria in Rossano⁵ – better known as Patir in reference to the πατήρ, the founding father or, to be more exact, the refounder St Bartholomew of Simeri⁶ – and St Nicholas at Casole, near Otranto,⁷ together with the testaments left by Gregory, abbot of the monastery of St Philip at Fragalà.⁸ These texts are the Italo-Greek monastic *typika* currently known, to which can be added the one from the monastery of St Bartholomew in Trigona (near Sinopoli, in Calabria), once mistakenly considered another foundation of St Bartholomew of Simeri.⁹ The *typikon* of Trigona is nothing but the translation (composed by Francesco Vucisano in 1571) into Palaeo-Calabrian dialect but using Greek letters of the text from Messina. This chapter will argue that this copy matters because it retains some of the monastic rules ascribed to Luke, first archimandrite and author of the *typikon* of St Savior, which are now missing from the text as transmitted by codex *Messan. gr.* 115.

Italo-Greek monastic *typika* have been traditionally divided into three groups, defined by geographical criteria: Palaeo-Calabrian, Calabro-Sicilian and Otrantine.¹⁰ The *typikon* of St John in Pantelleria instead escapes to this classification because of its peculiarities. In fact, as we

shall see, it has a more archaic character. This is manifested, for example, in its higher affinity with the principles of Pachomian monasticism rather than with those of the Studite which instead influence, in various ways, the other texts which we will discuss. The Palaeo-Calabrian tradition includes the presumed archetype *typikon* of St Bartholomew of Grottaferrata (*ante* 1050), the *typikon* of the Patir in Rossano, attributed to St Bartholomew of Simeri, and the *typikon* of the monastery of the Theotokos of Grottaferrata, founded in 1004 by St Neilos of Rossano.¹¹ It has been proven, however, that the hypothesis of the existence of an archetype *typikon* written by St Bartholomew of Grottaferrata, and for which we have neither an extant text nor any testimony, is unfounded.¹² The *typikon* of Grottaferrata, a liturgical *typikon* transmitted in codex *Crypt. gr.* 404 (*olim* Γ.α.I), was written between 1299 and 1300. This version does not represent the original text, but was revised by Abbot Blaise II near the end of the thirteenth century. In fact, Agostino Pertusi suggested that it should be placed in a distinct group, i.e., the one with the Grottaferrata *typika* derived precisely from the reformed *typikon* of Blaise II.¹³ Therefore, the Palaeo-Calabrian group is limited to just one text – according to the classification by Pertusi¹⁴ – i.e., the *typikon* of Patir transmitted in codex *Jenens.* G.b.q.6a and its apograph *Crypt. gr.* 213, which is the copy made by Sofronio Gassisi.

The Calabro-Sicilian tradition instead includes *typika* derived from or somehow dependent on the *typikon* of the St Savior in Messina, like the *typikon* of the Mother of God of Gala transmitted by codex *Messan. gr.* 159 (1211); the one of the Mother of God of Mili, transmitted by *Vat. gr.* 1877 (1292); the one of Bova transmitted by *Barb. gr.* 359 (1552), depending on the *typikon* of Mili;¹⁵ the one of St Bartholomew of Trigona.

Finally the Otrantine tradition refers to the *typikon* of the monastery of St Nicholas of Casole, founded in 1098–99 by the monk Joseph (†1124) who was also its first superior. This text, perhaps part of a longer *typikon*, is transmitted by an especially famous manuscript, the *Taurin.* C III 17, drafted in 1173 by Nicholas, third superior of the coenobium.

The *Typikon* of St John the Forerunner of Pantelleria

The *typikon* of the monastery of St John the Forerunner of *Patelarea* or *Pantelarea* or *Patelaria*,¹⁶ a place without doubt not identified with the isle of Pantelleria off western Sicily,¹⁷ has come down to us in Slavonic, probably in a shortened and reshaped version.¹⁸

The *typikon* is deemed to be the work “of Our Holy Father John the Priest, Superior of Pantelleria,”¹⁹ about whom little or nothing is known. As Augusta Acconcia Longo observed, the *Synaxarion* of Constantinople celebrates on 3 and 4 August the memory τοῦ ὁσίου πατρὸς ἡμῶν Ἰωάννου τοῦ ὁμολογητοῦ, ἡγουμένου τῆς Πατελαραίας. Yet in honor

of John, superior τῆς Πατελλαρέας, the *typikon* transmitted by *Paris. gr.* 1569 prescribes a canon of Theophanes for 4 August, whereas the manuscript *Coisl.* 218 reports, for 7 August, another canon in honor of John that is, however, according to Acconcia Longo, “just a cento of troparia borrowed from other canons in honor of ascetics”.²⁰ Another monk named John is mentioned in a canon for Basil, τοῦ ἡγουμένου μονῆς τῆς Πατελαρίας or Πετελαρίας, whose memory is celebrated in the *Synaxarion* of Constantinople on 21 and 22 June. The hymnographer calls John by the titles ποδηγός, ποδηγέτης, καθηγεμών, ποιμὴν, πατήρ, putting him on a higher level compared to Basil.²¹ However there is neither an explicit reference to Pantelleria nor any link between the island and John.

We do not know exactly when John and Basil lived, nor the date of foundation of the monastery, nor when the *typikon* was drafted. Nonetheless, the cumulative weight of the following testimonies allows the formulation of a dating hypothesis: the information transmitted by the *Vita Euthymii* according to which Euthymios of Sardis, Theophylaktos of Nikomedia and Eudoxios of Amorion were exiled on the island by order of Emperor Nikephoros I (802–811); the other report in *Annales Fuldenses* for the year 806 of a raid by Spanish Arabs on the island, where sixty monks were taken prisoners; the absence from the *typikon* of Pantelleria of references to the monastic reform of Theodore Studite (†826); its affinity with Pachomian monasticism; the title of *confessor* that goes with John in the *Synaxaria*, suggesting that he was the victim of a religious persecution, maybe during the so-called Moechian controversy or during the first phase of Iconoclasm; the reference in the canon of Basil to an ever-impending menace coming from “enemies” (vv. 345–352), most likely Saracens; the final Arabic occupation of Pantelleria between 836 and 864.²² Thus, based on all these elements, it seems likely that John and Basil lived between the end of the eighth and the beginning of ninth century.²³ However, we cannot exclude other hypotheses, like the one suggested by Vera von Falkenhausen according to whom John might actually be an Egyptian monk who moved “to the West in the seventh century, together with other compatriots, in consequence of the Arabic conquest of his homeland”.²⁴ Considering all these elements and allowing – hypothetically speaking – the identification with Pantelleria as the place in question, we can date the foundation of the monastery and the writing of the *typikon* sometime between the seventh century and the beginning of the ninth.

The Slavonic translation is instead attributed to the tenth century based on linguistic observations,²⁵ whereas the manuscripts that transmit it are all later.²⁶ Allowing for the fact that the original is indeed Siculo-Greek, it is not surprising that the text has been preserved in Slavonic since there are traces, although scarce, of a Slavic or more generally Balkan presence in Sicily between the seventh and ninth centuries.²⁷ However, the *typikon* of Pantelleria does not seem to be the only Siculo-Greek text

currently known only by its Slavonic translation. A Slavonic drafting of the so-called *Visio Danielis*, for which a dating *ante* 1078–1081 has been proposed,²⁸ may be derived, according to Paul J. Alexander, from a Greek original drafted in Sicily between 827 and 829.²⁹

Cautiously allowing that these texts derive from Siculo-Greek originals, we can formulate some hypotheses with respect to circumstances and methods of drafting. It could have been a translation performed *in loco* or one following the transfer of the Greek text to the Balkan peninsula. Nevertheless, one could also think of a mediation via an eastern *milieu*, such as the monasteries on Sinai or in Jerusalem, a trajectory which has been invoked in order to explain the existence of liturgical texts unrelated to the Constantinopolitan tradition but contained both in Slavic and Italo-Greek liturgical books.

The author of the *typikon* of Pantelleria begins by postulating that “Whoever has rejected [this world] and has entered the monastic state for the sake of [his] salvation cannot be saved unless he observes [the rules] which I intend to write down [here]”.³⁰ The text defines in a very succinct way the procedure to follow in church related to the entrance and the singing. About the latter aspect, the obligation for every monk to sit on the place corresponding to his own office is highlighted, and the exclusion from the community is expected for anyone who should disobey more than three times (Chapter 1).³¹ The order of dignity must be respected also during communion, the meal and the salutation (Chapter 2).

After some dispositions regarding diurnal and nocturnal, winter and summer prayer (Chapters 2–3), it is asserted that any monk who desires salvation and who is physically fit must fast during the day. Exceptions are made for those who are assigned to heavy manual work and the sick (Chapter 4). Some indications follow about the necessity to avoid inappropriate behavior, such as sitting on the bed when entering a brother’s cell, or bringing a brother into one’s own cell to talk to him, or even walking the streets holding hands, hugging, kissing or riding together. Anyone who has the need to talk to a brother must not do so in private, but outside the church, in front of the others (Chapters 5–7).

The text then gives detailed prescriptions about singing in church: whoever arrives before the singing begins, “let him enter, recite the prayer, and take his own place” (Chapter 8), whereas anyone who arrives late must be questioned by the superior who can either forgive him or rather decide to give him a punishment. Speaking about the singing in the following chapter (Chapter 9), the *typikon* establishes among other things the succession of canons and readings: “Four *kathismata* and two lections during the winter, two *kathismata* and one lection during the summer.” The texts must be respected, without anyone changing any word from the order of the singing, which is the one established by deacon John, whereas he who is used to singing differently must adapt to the

brothers (Chapter 10). A punishment is expected for anyone who arrives late for no reason (Chapter 11), whereas it is recommended not to stand too close to one another, and to keep at a distance from the brother's side while bowing for prayers (Chapter 12).

The behavior of those who arrive early is also specified regarding the entry into the refectory (Chapter 13), whereas the latecomers must be questioned by overseers, who possibly establish a punishment depending on whether it is a fast day or not. Also the overseers must conduct their job carefully (Chapter 15). References to work are included in Chapter 14. Elsewhere it is pointed out that the permission of elders is necessary for going to work (Chapter 16). Another rule prescribes a punishment for those who expose their laundry outside for three days (Chapter 17), and there is also the prohibition of whispering or exchanging written messages unless out of necessity (Chapter 18). It is recommended then to pay due respect to the overseers, and also to honor and love not only the elders but every other brother (Chapter 19). If the cohabitation risks to lead a brother into temptation, then an inquiry must be started, and in case the monk does not prove his obedience, he must be deprived of the monastic habit and banished from the monastery (Chapter 20).

About the rules of the *typikon*, it has been pointed out that many of them recall very closely, sometimes even literally, the principles of Pachomian monasticism. Among these, the attention to the prevention of homosexual tendencies (Chapters 5–7); punctuality (Chapters 8, 11 and 13); garment care (Chapter 17), but also to the promptness in going to work when the signal is given (Chapter 14) and the prohibition against whispering to each other (Chapter 18), are notable.³² The focus on the punishments and the sternness of the rules even led to the hypothesis that the institution might in fact have been a monastic prison, but the fact that one of the punishments contemplated is the banishment from the monastery stands against this interpretation.³³

Furthermore, some aspects of this text, such as indications regarding bows (Chapter 3), the negative judgment about possible visits in brothers' cells (Chapter 5), the questioning of those who are late to the refectory (Chapter 13), the presence of overseers (Chapter 15), restrictions regarding written correspondence (Chapter 18), may be found, more or less similar, in later *typika*, such as *Evergetis*, *Kecharitomene*, *Kosmoteira*, *Phoberos* and others.³⁴ Such similarities can probably be read as the reflection of general principles that were common to all Byzantine monasticism throughout its history. As in other *typika*, for example the Rule for Athos,³⁵ but also, as we will see, in the *typikon* of the Patir at Rossano, it is possible to find dispensations from the general diet for those who carry on heavy work, as discussed in Chapter 4.

Chapter 10 highlights the necessity that those who have other conventions adjust, in the matter of singing, to the local tradition (established by Deacon John). This represents an indication of the presence in

the monastery of monks of different origin. On the other hand, the very emphasis set by the *typikon* on the observance of order, hierarchy, one's own dignity in the various places where the monastic life takes place, the sternness of the punishments (in many cases banishment from the monastery is expected), the reference to problems related to cohabitation (theft, the refusal of sharing cells or the table) and even the call to conform, as in the singing, to the local tradition, may reflect the difficulties that a numerically relevant community must have met, a community in which any behavior differing from the rule, if tolerated, could threaten the general harmony. In this regard we can recall that in 806 raiders from Muslim Spain captured sixty monks on the Island of Pantelleria,³⁶ all of them most likely coming from the monastery of St John the Forerunner.

We know nothing, on the other hand, about Deacon John, who may have established the *akolouthia* in use on the island. I do not think he could be the same John who founded the monastery, because the text would have been referring to him with more deference or in any case in a different way, for example with expressions such as “as established by our holy father John” and similar.

The (Re)foundations of Saint Bartholomew of Simeri: the Theotokos Nea Hodigitria of Rossano and the St Savior in *lingua phari* of Messina

The *typika* of the Patir at Rossano and of St Savior at Messina, like those of St Nicholas in Casole and of the testaments of Gregory, abbot of St Philip in Fragalà, belong to monastic institutions established or rather re-established in the Norman period.

Focusing on the monasteries refounded by St Bartholomew of Simeri, regarding at first the Patir, it was essentially the “necessity of gaining steady consent within the local Hellenic-speaking population”³⁷ that probably led Roger I to support, together with Admiral Christodoulos, the monastery refounded by St Bartholomew in the manner reported in his *Bios* (Chapter 16).³⁸ Again, political needs dictated the later promotion by Roger II of the refoundation of the monastery of St Savior,³⁹ managed in its initial stages by the holy man himself – who died on 19 August 1130, therefore before the conclusion of the work in 1133⁴⁰ – and so entrusted its completion to Luke (†1149), who was a disciple of Bartholomew and already superior of the Patir, then became the first archimandrite of the monastery in Messina. In fact, if on one hand the refoundation of St Savior, and the constitution of the archimandrite with it, was functional to the control of other Greek monasteries, not only Sicilian but also Calabrian, that were put under its dependency,⁴¹ on the other hand it answered the necessity to create a reference point for the Greek population on the island to use the same propagandistic (and also controlling) activity conducted through the Patir on the Greeks in

Northern Calabria.⁴² We must not underestimate, then, the importance of the strategic placement of the monastery, situated exactly *in lingua phari* at the entrance of Messina's harbor.⁴³

We can now review the complex personality of Bartholomew, who acted as the refounder of the Patir and St Savior besides being the alleged author, or maybe acted more properly as inspirer, of the *typikon* of Rossano, and about whom mistaken or at least outdated information still circulates. First of all the refoundation date of the Patir⁴⁴ should be established between the end of the eleventh century and the beginning of twelfth, in any case before 1104–05, the year of the *privilegium* by which Pope Paschal II granted the monastery the exemption from the diocesan ordinary.⁴⁵ The refoundation of Patir is therefore placed in the years close to the intervention of Roger I in Rossano in favor of Roger Borsa against William de Grantmesnil (1093), so that it is legitimate to suppose “that, under the same circumstances, the great-count Roger I took care of subsidizing the rebirth of the monastery of Patir and return of religious services”.⁴⁶ This allows us to identify in the great-count the first benefactor, together with Admiral Christodoulos, of the monastery of Rossano.

Still, it has been proved that at his return from Constantinople, Bartholomew was accused of heresy not by the Benedictines of St Trinity in Mileto,⁴⁷ but by the monks of the Greek monastery of St Angel in Militino, in the diocese of Rossano, the same monastery where St Bartholomew had started his religious life. The reasons for the controversy should then be attributed, rather than to the loathing of Latins by the Greeks, “to reasons intrinsic to the same Calabrian-Greek monastic communities,”⁴⁸ such as to frictions and envy of the original monastery toward the new foundation, because it had become especially rich and powerful and extended towards the founder himself, because he was honored not only by the Norman lords, but also in Byzantium and on Mount Athos.⁴⁹ His visit to Constantinople and in the Holy Mountain⁵⁰ is especially important from our point of view, since on that occasion Bartholomew was able to get to know closely some monastic communities – both in the capital of the Byzantine Empire and on Mount Athos – whose organization and rules may have had an impact on the *typika* of Rossano and Messina, as well as on the organization of the Archimandritate at St Savior.⁵¹ Bartolomew's refounding activity, which was for the Normans an instrument of propaganda and control of the Hellenic-speaking population of Southern Italy and Sicily, favored the revival of Italo-Greek monasticism in those same territories.

The *Typikon* of the Theotokos Nea Hodigitria (Patir) of Rossano

The *typikon* of the Patir of Rossano is transmitted by codex *Jenens*. G.b.q.6a, donated, together with other volumes, to the Thüringer

Universitäts und Landesbibliothek of Jena at the end of the nineteenth century by Wolfgang Maximilian Goethe, grandson of the famous writer.⁵² The manuscript is composed of two parts, assembled together only in the nineteenth century. The first part is made of parchment and contains the Greek text of the liturgical *typikon* (ff. 1–160v) – called in the text “*synaxarion*” and “*typikon kanonarion*”⁵³ – and of the disciplinary *typikon* (ff. 161–183). The second part is made of paper, and contains at ff. 190–219 the Latin translation of the disciplinary *typikon*⁵⁴ realized in 1712 “a P. Magistro Abbate d. Theophilo ab Alexandro Procuratori Generali ordinis S. Basilii Romae”, as well as chronological annotations, again in Latin translation, relative to the transfer of some relics (ff. 220–222), the Latin translation of the Greek text of f. 8v (f. 222v) and the summary of the *kephalaia* written on ff. 1–8.⁵⁵

Concerning the dating of this manuscript, Annette von Stockhausen stresses that, on one hand, the last annotation, relative to the transfer of some relics, written by the main copyist, reports the date 8 July 1152 (f. 187v); whereas on the other hand the next annotation, that records the transfer of the relics of Saints John the Almsgiver, Blasios and Menas, has the date of 19 July 1182, and it is written in a very different hand with respect to the previous one.⁵⁶ Given these elements, von Stockhausen dates the work by the main scribe, and thus also the codex, to the period between July 1152 and July 1182, rejecting the dating proposed by Santo Lucà based on the palaeographical analysis of the script and on an annotation present on f. 2v, where the name of the superior and archimandrite John is written. Lucà identified this John with *Johanninum*, archimandrite appointed on 13 November 1254.⁵⁷ It is, however, possible that the latter annotation could have been added some time after the manuscript was copied. Nevertheless, we cannot entirely disregard its content, particularly since the Abbot John himself “states to have proceeded to have both the foundation *typikon*, παρὰ τοῦ ἀγιωτάτου πατρὸς ἡμῶν τυπωθέν, that he found in written form, and the liturgical *typikon* that had instead no written form, written down in order to prevent them from being forgotten”.⁵⁸ Therefore, it is clear that the draft of the liturgical *typikon* must be closely connected with this person. We must consider, however, that the given annotation does not have any dating, and also that the name John was common; therefore, we cannot give for sure his identification with the above-mentioned *Johanninum*. Thus, the abbot John mentioned in the annotation at f. 2v of the Jena manuscript could have lived in the twelfth century instead of the thirteenth.

In sum, in the second half of the twelfth century, probably between July 1152 and July 1182, John, abbot and archimandrite of the Patir monastery, gave order to copy a *typikon* now preserved as *Jenens*. G.b.q.6a, containing the liturgical *typikon*, for the first time in written form, together with the already written foundation *typikon* or, rather, the disciplinary *typikon*, παρὰ τοῦ ἀγιωτάτου πατρὸς ἡμῶν [i.e., St Bartholomew

of Simeri] τυπωθέν, in John's words. The authorship of the Patir *typikon* is, in fact, a problematic issue. Given that, as declared, Bartholomew did not actually write the liturgical *typikon*, we can only investigate the draft of the disciplinary *typikon*. St Bartholomew's *Bios* merely records that many monastic houses were, depending on the monastery, "regulated and administrated with divine rules and canons proposed by him" (Chapter 18),⁵⁹ without any clear reference to a written text. The homily by Philagatos *Kerameus*, perhaps composed on the first anniversary of the saint's death, does not give any useful information either.⁶⁰ But the most interesting hint of an absence comes, albeit indirectly, from the *typikon* written by Bartholomew's disciple, Luke, for St Savior of Messina.⁶¹

Since Luke does not mention in his text any *typikon* of Patir, nor teachings and rules given by St Bartholomew, his omission should be considered significant. On the contrary, he recalls instead an oral tradition of a set of rules. What he has learned and handed down derived ἐκ διαφορῶν παλαιῶν τυπικῶν from Stoudios, Athos, Jerusalem and other monasteries, and such material was written down by Luke himself, ostensibly to save it from oblivion, but, more probably, in answer to an explicit request from Roger II. We will come back to Luke's *typikon* below. It is clear that the archimandrite who previously had the charge of superior at the Patir should have known the monastery's *typikon*, if there ever was one. His silence, therefore, can only be intentional and may even be revealing perhaps of his desire to step out from the traditions of the Rossano monastery.

However, St Bartholomew is explicitly cited in the Patir *typikon* as the one who set the rules and handed them down to his monks:

Typikon [. . .] established by our most holy father Bartholomew in the monastery he founded named after Nea Hodigitria, that he had handed down to his monks.⁶²

In addition, the chapter on hospices (V, f. 163r) starts with the sentence: "Our most holy father liked also this."⁶³ On f. 183v, we read: "Our glorious father Bartholomew's other chapters."⁶⁴ Also Abbot John, in his aforementioned note on f. 2v, related the disciplinary *typikon* to Bartholomew.⁶⁵ Similarly, on the liturgical *typikon* we can read, on f. 8r, "as established by our holy father; the *typika* of Stoudios and Holy Mountain instead say . . .",⁶⁶ thus drawing explicit comparisons. This last note deserves attention: the author of this text cannot be St Bartholomew of Simeri, since he is confronting what was established by St Bartholomew and what δὲ, "instead", Stoudios and the Athos *typika* prescribe. Given this remark, I think that the *typikon* of the Patir was not written personally, but was rather simply inspired by the teaching of the re-founder of the monastery.

Regarding the sources, the *typikon* expressly cites Basil of Caesarea, Theodore Stoudite, and, therefore, the Stoudite *typika* – probably the

Διαθήκη and the *ὑποτύποις* or, maybe, a presumed (now lost) *Typikon* of Stoudios – and those from Athos (f. 8r), that is, the rule of Athanasios the Athonite, whose model was Theodore Stoudite himself. Some texts attributed to Theodore, which correspond to certain points in the *Typikon* of the Patriarch Alexios Stoudites (1025–43), are transmitted in ff. 170r–173v, which contain provisions for the superior election and other issues, and also the *Epitimia*;⁶⁷ whereas we read at f. 167r, in the chapter on *prastetai*,⁶⁸ a text without correspondence in Theodore’s known works:

Saint Theodore Stoudite, blaming and considering what to avoid says: “Your brother to a job, and you to another, either to the study or to the works of the rest.”⁶⁹

In the chapter on *kollyba*, “koliva” (i.e., a boiled wheat “cake blessed before liturgy”),⁷⁰ we read instead a reference to a local tradition and to one of the monasteries of the *polis*, i.e., Constantinople, about which, however, it has not been possible to identify the source:

If the commemoration of minor saints falls on Wednesday or Friday instead, *koliva* are prepared for the day after for the liturgy, according to the tradition of the holy monasteries of the City. If it falls instead on other days of the week, i.e., Monday, Tuesday, Thursday, Saturday or Sunday, they are prepared on vespers, according to the tradition of our region.⁷¹

Still, the provision regarding the celebration of the Presanctified also on Tuesdays and Thursdays seems to recall canon fifty-two of the Council in Trullo.⁷²

Returning now to the texts attributed to Theodore Stoudite, particularly interesting is one relating to the election of the superior, the requirements for which are literally the ones defined by the legislation of Justinian.⁷³ The whole monastic community participates in the election, which may agree on a single name or, in case they do not, three candidates must be proposed. The Emperor will designate then the new shepherd:

the one on whom they all have expressed the common consensus [. . .] or, in the case where three have been mentioned, one of those whom they have chosen.⁷⁴

The new superior has to be a monk who is a “son and disciple of this monastery”,⁷⁵ or one who has lived at least six years there, and who knows its rules.⁷⁶

This section, to the end of the chapter, is also in the *typikon* of Messina, *Messan. gr.* 115, f. 255r, where only the end is different:

Thus may the monastery grow, flourish and bear good fruits and everything go well thanks to the power of the Creator of the universe and eternally God and the benevolence of the saint Forerunner here venerated, our protector and help.⁷⁷

The appointment of the superior, therefore, in both the Patir of Rossano and in St Savior of Messina probably took place according to the procedure described in this text, which, I think, was originally written for the monastery of St John the Forerunner of Stoudios, although not by Theodore Stoudite himself. The reference to the role of the *basileus*, who confirms the choice of the monastic community, or chooses one of three candidates proposed by the monks, implies that the monastery is a *basiliki moni*, an imperial monastery, and Stoudios became such at a period following the death of Theodore (826).⁷⁸ In the case of St Savior at Messina, the condition of royal monastery, linked to the Norman monarchy, is widely attested by the surviving documentation,⁷⁹ whereas for the Patir the issue seems more problematic. In fact, the only dated document known which defines the Patir as a *μὲν βασιλική*, a “royal monastery”, is a golden bull of Roger II dated to May 1130 (probably in place of 1131).⁸⁰ The authenticity of the golden bull is doubtful,⁸¹ but the chapter concerning the election of the superior transmitted by the *typikon* – in which, as we have seen, the choice made by the monks is expected to be ratified by the sovereign – seems to confirm that the Patir was also at some point a *basiliki moni*.

The texts in the manuscript of Jena attributed to St Theodore Stoudite are followed by the section on *diakonitai*. Within this section, precisely at ff. 178v–179v, the rules governing entry into the monastic life are transcribed. The *typikon* recommends in this regard that the superior carefully examines the person seeking entry, and if he is known and judged worthy of the monastic habit, he can get it right away. If he is not known he must stay for a year at the monastery doing the most menial jobs, demonstrating the sincerity of his intention and his good will. At the end of that year he will receive the tonsure, but he will have to observe a further probationary period prescribed by the holy fathers, for three years.⁸² These provisions, as we shall see, are also found in the disciplinary *typikon* of St Savior at Messina. In this case, the section has been transmitted in the Palaeo-Calabrian translation of the *typikon* of the monastery of St Bartholomew of Trigona.⁸³

Focusing now on the provisions contained in the preceding chapters (*kephalaia*), we observe first that, with regard to the diet of the monks, the *typikon* of Patir provides only occasionally – within the various chapters – guidance concerning the diet in ordinary time, whereas it regulates

diet during Lent and the fasts of St Philip and of the Holy Apostles, including Saturday of the Great Martyr Theodore, the Annunciation,⁸⁴ the feast of the Holy Forty Martyrs, the Saturday of Lazarus (which occurs during Lent), Palm Sunday, Easter (whose diet also applies to Christmas Day), the period until Pentecost and fasting for the Dormition of Mary, interrupted in the days when monks celebrate the Transfiguration. During the first week of Lent, on Monday the monks eat only half a pound, or six ounces of bread, and a pound instead on Tuesday and Thursday, and throughout the week they eat vegetables, pomegranates, raisins and “about five figs”.⁸⁵

The Liturgy of the Presanctified is celebrated during the whole of Lent on Tuesdays and Thursdays, as well as in the days established by the *typikon* of the Church (probably the liturgical *typikon* of Hagia Sophia in Constantinople), i.e., Wednesdays and Fridays. Therefore at the Patir monastery the Liturgy of Presanctified was celebrated every day of the week except Saturday and Sunday, as prescribed in canon fifty-two of the Council in Trullo⁸⁶ (to which, however, the *typikon* does not refer). Every Saturday and Sunday, including Saturday of the holy Great Martyr Theodore and Sunday of Orthodoxy, monks eat a cooked dish with olive oil. On the evening of the Great Saturday monks eat either the food “which the one who rose from the dead will send to us”, prepared by the stewards by order of the superior (dried, fried or marinated fish), or fish prepared with milk or green cheese or *anthotyro*.⁸⁷ The prohibition against eating meat is not made explicit, contrary to what we read in the Testaments of Gregory, abbot of the monastery of St Philip in Fragalà and in the *typikon* of Messina.⁸⁸ Wine is allowed, as well as eggs and cheese (always prohibited by the *typikon* of St Nicholas of Casole);⁸⁹ however, it is forbidden during the fasts of the Mother of God, the Apostles and St Philip. In the last two periods, it should be noted that the first week “should be kept chaste and pure from all things”, and a measure of wine is granted only to the sick, for comfort, on Tuesdays and Thursdays.⁹⁰

The *typikon* provides on some occasions the suspension of fasting on Wednesdays and Fridays. On the Wednesday of the fifth week of Lent, monks drink the wine measure set for Monday; on Wednesday of the Adoration of the Cross, they eat a cooked dish with olive oil. One is dispensed from fasting on Wednesdays and Fridays during the celebration of the Dormition of Mary as well as for the commemoration of those saints of which the vigil is celebrated and for whom the reading of a prophet at vespers is prescribed, and of the Πᾶσα πνοή and the Gospel at *orthros*. Those who perform heavy work, that is, woodcutters, metal workers and tanners, can drink a measure of wine on Wednesday when monks suspend fasting, on Friday half only. As for the monks who are traveling, if they are at sea they can eat on Wednesdays and Fridays the same food eaten on Tuesdays and Thursdays, but less in quantity and quality.

Fish is, of course, an important food, so that the *typikon* dedicated a chapter, the second, to the fishing boat of the monastery. It specifies that the fish caught between Palm Sunday and Pentecost should serve as a reserve for the sick brothers and for guests, and that the steward is not allowed to sell it.⁹¹ It seems, however, that some monks were in the habit of trading the fruits of their labor for the fish caught from the boat of the monastery or by others: this custom was condemned in the chapter on *prastetai* (Chapter 16).

Returning to the dietary prescriptions, we have already mentioned that exceptions to the general rule are granted to those who perform strenuous or heavy tasks: woodcutters, blacksmiths (which, however, do not have to work on Fridays unless it is absolutely necessary) and tanners, even *protopsaltes* and the leaders of the choir during particularly long performances. Similar exemptions for monks engaged in heavy work are found in the *typika* of Pantelleria and of Mount Athos.⁹² In this part of the *typikon*, the amount of wine that can be consumed by the *prastetai* is also indicated. The *prastetai* were probably laymen who worked in the suburban properties of the monastery, and for this they received a monthly compensation (μηνιατικόν) in the form of vegetables, cheese and olive oil, and at harvest time, six measures of wine.⁹³

But the *typikon* of the Patir contains provisions that regulate other aspects of the life of the monastery also. Thus it prohibits private property (πεκούλια) like the *typikon* of the Holy Mountain, the *typikon* of Messina and the Second Testament of Gregory of Fragalà and other contemporary documents.⁹⁴ It also prohibits *hesychia* and forbids receiving hesychasts at the monastery. Still, previously married men are not allowed into the monastery, because these people can rarely devote themselves to monastic life.⁹⁵ Moreover, a curious chapter is that entitled Περὶ τοῦ δαρμού, ‘Of the beatings’, in which those who raise their hands against each other are blamed because they do not take into account the words of Christ: “turn the other cheek”.

The reading of the *typikon* allows us, then, to obtain some information about the organization of the monastery and the jobs that were performed there. We have already mentioned the fishermen (ἄλιεις), woodcutters (πελεκανοί), metal workers (χαλκεῖς), and tanners (βυρσεῖς), but the text also names tailors (ράπτης), shoemakers (τσαγγάρης), calligraphers (καλλιγράφος), gardeners (κηπουροί), carpenters (ξυλουργοί), carvers (λεπτουργοί), turners (τορνατορείς) and shepherds (βοσκός). Other functions are named in the section on *diakonitai*: the steward (οἰκόνομος), the treasurer (δοχειαρίος), the ecclesiarch (ἐκκλησιάρχης), the archivist (χαρτοφύλαξ), the warehouseman (ἀποθηκάριος), the infirmarian (νοσοκόμος [*sic*]) and the cellarer (κελλάριος). Still others are mentioned in the section on *Epitimia*: the precentor (κανονάρχης), the monk assigned to sounding the semantron (σιμαντάριος), that assigned to candles (κανδηλάριος), the gatekeeper (ὀστιάριος) and the cook (μάγειρος). For some activities there was a

supervisor: the πρωτοπραστήτης (who managed the work of *prastetai*), the πρωτοκηπουρός, the πρωτοαλιεύς, the πρωτοτραπεζίτης (supervisor of refectories), the πρωτοξενοδόχος (supervisor of guestmasters),⁹⁶ whereas for others there was an assistant, such as the παραικόνομος and παραδοχειάριος.⁹⁷ As Berenice Cavarra notes,

The organization of work in Patir of Rossano was complex and consisted variously in a range of assignments and tasks that bear witness to a flourishing and diversified economic reality.⁹⁸

In conclusion, taking into account the texts that have survived, the *Typikon* of the Patir does not seem to have links with a local tradition of written rules. Rather, it refers to the principles of Stoudite monasticism that are transposed and adapted to the local context. At the same time this text does not appear to have been transmitted to other Italo-Greek monasteries. It was therefore exclusively the rule of the monastery of Rossano and did not give rise to anything that might be properly called a Palaeo-Calabrian tradition.

The *Typikon* of St Savior of Messina

The *typikon* drafted by Luke (†1149), first Archimandrite of the monastery of St Savior *in lingua phari* in Messina, is transmitted by codex *Messan. gr.* 115, copied between the second and the third quarter of the twelfth century.⁹⁹ More exactly, ff. 9–262 transmit the liturgical *typikon*, followed by some later appendixes transcribed on ff. 263–269,¹⁰⁰ whereas ff. 1–8 contain the introduction,¹⁰¹ seemingly acephalous.¹⁰² On ff. 252v–262r one can read some liturgical-disciplinary provisions that appear to belong, at least partially, to a lost disciplinary *typikon*¹⁰³ and that can be found, sometimes in a different arrangement, in the Palaeo-Calabrian translation of this *typikon* represented by the *typikon* of the monastery of St Bartholomew of Trigona.¹⁰⁴ Furthermore, this text is the only testimony of other dispositions dictated by Luke himself, i.e., some κανονι (*sic*) that had to be read every year in front of monks and abbots in all the monasteries that depended from St Savior and that were therefore communicated in written form to every abbot.¹⁰⁵

On the other hand, the introduction to the *typikon* was written at a later period. There the author makes some sort of evaluation recalling, in a retrospective way, the work done to start the new foundation, and recalling the efforts made, among other things, to improve the monks' discipline, but also to provide the monastery with essential buildings such as the hospital, the hospice and various residences. Therefore the text must be seen not just as an introduction, but also as an afterword drafted in a period during which Luke could feel his time coming to an end, and can therefore be dated to 1149 or a little earlier.¹⁰⁶

From this point of view, the introduction shows moreover *diathikai* features, i.e., features proper to testaments left by the founders or refounders of a monastery, whose model certainly was the testament of Theodore Stoudite.¹⁰⁷ The latter represents, as mentioned above, one of the sources used by Luke, together with the *typika* “of the Holy Mountain, of Jerusalem, and of several others”, whereas the lack of explicit reference to the teaching of Saint Bartholomew of Simeri is surprising. It has been suggested that such silence may be ascribed to the fact that there was no written form of the *typikon* of the Patir – neither liturgical nor disciplinary – when Luke was writing. However the written form is not essential to the existence of this type of texts, which can be also transmitted verbally.¹⁰⁸ Luke himself states to have put rules in written form to save them from oblivion and to obey the king. It may also be that Luke never intentionally cites the *typikon* of Patir as his source because his own – and probably also Roger’s – aim was to create a valid rule unifying the practice of different monasteries, that until then may have had their own customs: it was therefore necessary to standardize customs and traditions by using supra-national models acknowledged as valid and acceptable by everyone. On the other hand, the *typikon* of Luke is different from the one of the Patir as to the type of calendar cycle of fixed feasts it adopts, since it uses the full one, whereas in the *typikon* of Rossano the so-called middle one, similarly to the *typikon* of St Nicholas of Casole, is attested.¹⁰⁹ This fact might represent another sign of the will from the archimandrite to part from the traditions of his original monastery.

Looking at the contents of the introduction, we may remark that it not only takes inspiration from ancient principles of Byzantine monasticism, especially but not exclusively the Stoudite one.¹¹⁰ It mentions the prohibition of spiritual brotherhoods, any unnecessary relations with women and journeys outside the monastery, but also shares some traits with the monastic reform movement, like the ban on idiorhythmic practices and the importance placed on confession, good order and humility.¹¹¹

The original disciplinary *typikon* of Luke is certainly lost. Some of his rules survive nonetheless in the *typikon* of the monastery of Saint Bartholomew of Trigona, precisely in the sections entitled respectively “Short Rules dealing with the usual order of the ecclesiastical office” and “Rules dealing with the monastic order”.¹¹² In this document we can read rules of a liturgical and disciplinary character, some of which are about the monks’ diet during Lent, at Easter, during the period between the Sunday of Thomas and Pentecost (in this period it is established, among other things, that the milk taken on Sunday must not be used to make cheese but must be drunk by the monks, and that any excess must be given to the poor), during the feast of St John the Forerunner (when monks eat two cooked meals, fish and “anything else that God will send”, with the exception of eggs, cheese and milk which are absolutely forbidden during this time, called the fast of the Holy Apostles) and during the period

between the feast of the Holy Apostles and the fast of the Virgin Mary (when it is allowed, with the exception of Wednesdays and Fridays, to eat a cooked dish with olive oil and fish twice a week). During the latter period, from 5 to 9 August, the Transfiguration is celebrated and two meals are provided, with a cooked dish, fish “and anything else that the Transfiguration of Christ will send”,¹¹³ with the exception of cheese and eggs. For the feast of the Dormition of the Mother of God, the monks celebrate nine days and eat anything that Christ will send them, giving endless thanks to the Mother of God. From this feast to the fast of Saint Philip, the monks eat two cooked dishes with olive oil daily, with the exception of Wednesdays and Fridays, and twice a week fish, and if it could not be found it is not forbidden to eat something else, after obtaining a dispensation from the abbot.

After some liturgical provisions and the list of the days when the *kollyba* are made,¹¹⁴ we find other disciplinary canons¹¹⁵ beginning with prescriptions about the monks’s garments and the command to make one’s bed, which find an equivalent in the Stoudite rule.¹¹⁶ The section regarding entering the monastery is instead almost identical to the one included in the *typikon* of the Patir: here too there is a distinction between known people, to whom the monastic habit is granted immediately, and unknown people who first have to carry out some tasks in the monastery for a year. They then receive the tonsure but they have to observe after that a further probation period of three years as prescribed by the fathers.

The superior must pay better attention to the choice of monks who will be ordained deacons and priests, with the clarification that no monk who has not first received “the Divine and Great Habit”¹¹⁷ may be ordained priest. Furthermore no deacon or priest coming from another monastery is allowed to the liturgy before one year or at least six months of living at St Savior, during which he must learn the local customs. The abbot has then to gather detailed information about monks coming from other monasteries (the *xenokouritai*) who seek admission, making sure that they were not banished from their original monastery because of disciplinary issues. If they are admitted but then commit some fault they will be sent away.

After these provisions we read in the *typikon* a list of monastic officials:¹¹⁸ the great ecclesiarch, the *protovestiaros*, the great steward, the treasurer (δοχειαριον), the sacristian (σκεβοφυλακα), the keeper of books (βιβλιοφυλακα), the infirmarian (νοσοκομο), the cellarer (κελλαριον), the proto-refectorian (πρωτοτραπεζαριον) and the proto-guestmaster (πρωτοξενοδοχο), all chosen by the superior among the more trustworthy and discreet brothers. The final three points are about the bread-dough, which must be made by the monks with their hands; the prohibition for women to enter the monastery; and the prohibition to bury strangers who were not monks in the cemetery of the monastery.

Regarding the Canons about the monastic order,¹¹⁹ Luke recommends that the monasteries and the abbots be kept pure from any vice and sin. It is prohibited for the monks to eat meat, and such prohibition stands also for the laymen admitted to the hospital placed outside the walls of the monastery so that the weaker brothers are not led into temptation. Whoever commits a sin of fornication must be excommunicated, and if he is an abbot he must be deposed from his rank. If a monk fornicates or eats meat and the abbot knows about it, both of them must be segregated and separated. Neither the abbot nor the monks may eat in their cell unless they are ill, and no one can eat before the established time. If the abbot gives a present to a monk, giving him more than necessary, he must be deposed because he provided an occasion to make a gain. In the same way the abbot must forbid his monks from owning gold, silver or money.¹²⁰

No abbot may receive a monk coming from another monastery, and if someone should do that without the permission of the archimandrite, he must be sent off. On the other hand, if a monk leaves his own monastery and goes to another one the abbots of both monasteries must be excommunicated: one because he did not look for him, imitating the good shepherd, the other because, like a thief, he took what did not belong to him; whereas no abbot may banish a monk from his own monastery without the permission of the archimandrite.

There must be no blood ties between abbots and monks, and no abbot or monk may have a spiritual son, to avoid committing sins.¹²¹ No new abbot can be elected and no abbot can ordain any of his monks a deacon or priest without the archimandrite's consent. No abbot may perform the tonsure with the stole, but only following the tradition established by the holy fathers. No abbot may tonsure a beardless young man (*φιγλολο σβαρββατο*).

Some prescriptions recall the prohibition to keep contact with women, even if they are nuns: women must be kept away from monasteries, and no abbot or monk must eat at a table where a woman is sitting.¹²² It is furthermore prohibited for monks and abbots to sleep in nunneries as much as no nun may sleep in a monastery. Moreover, no abbot or monk may confess a woman¹²³ whereas no monk may get his own confession outside the monastery.

No monk must discuss with his abbot about advancing doctrinal issues since "one and only is the doctrine and one and only is the monk's art: to obey".¹²⁴ No abbot must, on the other hand, for any reason punish a monk with whipping,¹²⁵ and no monk must raise his hand against a brother or a layman. No monk may leave for Jerusalem or any other holy places or go to town or anywhere else without the permission of the abbot.

In the various monasteries it is necessary that there should be a certain number of priests and clerics. At the refectory one cannot eat without

readings, and in church there must be candles always lit. Every monastery must have an infirmary, a hospital and, whenever possible, the *archontarikia*, i.e., quarters for official visitors so that the monks are not disturbed in their cells by laymen coming into the monastery for other necessities.¹²⁶ It is moreover prohibited to abbots and monks to hunt and, regarding the clothing, it is stated that no abbot or monk may wear trousers nor linen shirts, unless he is performing heavy work or is ill.¹²⁷

These prescriptions seem to constitute the fragments of a lost disciplinary *typikon*. However, the disappearance of such an important text for the monastic life – not only for St Savior of Messina, but also for every monastery depending on it – raises not a few perplexities and leads rather to believe that this document, like the liturgical *typikon*, lay somewhere in the form of notes¹²⁸ and that Luke was not able to better organize its content because of his death.

The *Testaments* of Gregory, Abbot of St Philip of Fragalà

Near Patti in Sicily, between Mirto and Frazzanò, stand the ruins of the monastery of St Philip of Fragalà, “the greatest monastery of the early Norman period”.¹²⁹ We do not know by whom and when it was founded, but it existed at the time of the Arab rule in Sicily, as may be inferred from the words of Gregory, abbot of the monastery at the time of Roger I (1072–1101).¹³⁰ Both in the First and in the Second Testament, in fact, Gregory claims to have suffered “many terrors in this monastery from our masters the Ismaelites” (text A, Chapter 2).¹³¹ In this period, St Philip went through a difficult phase: it was “deserted and unknown”, Gregory says (text A, Chapter 1 and text B, Chapter 1). Gregory is credited with having revived the fortunes of the monastery, thanks to the protection and support, especially financial, of Count Roger I and of other influential officials including Nicholas, *kaprilingas* and *mystolektis*, the logothete Leon and the notary and admiral Eugenius of Troina.¹³² Indeed Norman patronage is attested by many documents, starting from the seven privileges granted by Roger I between 1090 and 1099.¹³³ After the death of Roger I, Abbot Gregory continued to enjoy the protection of Countess Adelasia del Vasto, who held the regency for her sons Symeon (1101–5) and Roger II (1105–12), and then during Roger II’s rule, as other documents of this period show.¹³⁴

In his *Testaments*¹³⁵ Gregory recalls his efforts “to bring this obscure place to prominence” (text A, Chapter 1 and text B, Chapter 1), through, first of all, an intensive work of rebuilding in the monastery, where the main church and a tower were erected, and at the churches (text A, Chapter 2) listed in the *Second Testament*: St Michael (also already mentioned in the *First Testament*), St John the Forerunner, the Mother of God, the Apostle Peter, the Holy Philadelphoi, St Thallelaios, St Nicholas, St Mark, another church dedicated to the Apostle Peter and the Church of Mother

of God founded by George Maniakes.¹³⁶ Furthermore, the abbot claims to have built cells (text A, Chapter 3) and some rooms where the monks could rest and eat (text B, Chapter 3).

To ensure maintenance of the monks and of those who had stayed in the monastery, Gregory gave “vines and fields” (text A, Chapter 3) and “revenues of vines and fields” (text B, Chapter 3), “the movable and immovable property which belonged to me from my family” which he dedicated to St Philip when he was tonsured (text B, Chapter 4). In the light of this effort, that led to a real and enduring rebirth of St Philip, Gregory can be rightly considered its refounder. Furthermore, he drafted for *his* monastery a rule, which he calls κανών, which is not extant. However we can get a sense of the contents thanks to the *Testaments*.¹³⁷

The *kanon* drafted by Gregory included a dietary rule, although the *First* and the *Second Testaments* really give very little information in this regard. In fact, the abbot only mentions the reintroduction of the ban against eating meat, which had not been respected in Sicily during Arab rule;¹³⁸ indication of fasting periods – Lent, fasts of St Philip and of the Apostles – and days – Wednesdays and Fridays – but, as Gregory says in the *Second Testament*, “except for the feasts of major saints and those who are sick in body.” Another section listed the days that the monks had to observe: Sunday, the fourteen days of the Lord, the days of the twelve Apostles and of major saints and the feasts of the Mother of God. These days the monks did not have to work, but they must devote themselves to reciting psalms and hymns. Only the *Second Testament* enjoins monks to dedicate themselves to the reading of the Holy Scriptures (text B, Chapter 5) and prohibits private property (text B, Chapter 9). Regarding entrance in the monastery, it is required that the postulants are tonsured “after three years of probation” (text A, Chapter 8 and text B, Chapter 8), whereas, as we have seen, both *typika* of the Patir and of St Savior prescribe that the postulant is tonsured after one year and that, after this, the monk observe three years of probation.

As regards the election of the superior, our author in fact does not establish a rule, but he simply refers to the manner of having chosen his successor (text A, Chapter 7 and text B, Chapter 7). As we have seen, the *typika* of Patir and St Savior include a text on the election of the superior attributed to Theodore Stoudite. According to this text it is the whole monastic community that elects its superior, or, if there is not a unanimous vote, the community suggests three names among which the *basileus* chooses and appoints the superior. This is, probably, the tradition that Gregory refers to, as does the fact that the successor chosen, his nephew Blasios, was also a son of the monastery of St Philip. But Gregory seems to have rather imposed his successor against the community’s wishes,¹³⁹ as the prohibition to murmur against the superior could well underscore, besides the repeated calls to obedience among the required qualities of the monks (text A, Chapter 9 and text B, Chapter 9).

However, in the *Second Testament* (Chapter 10) Gregory states:

If the superior whom I have promoted should journey to Jerusalem . . . the monks have permission to wait three years in accordance with the declarations of the superior before me and the brothers. If he should return in the manner he has said, he should retain his pastoral rank. If he should not return, and if I, a poor sinner, am still alive, I will promote another to the service of the flock. If, on the other hand, I have departed from this transient life before he should arrive back after the stipulated time, let one from among the brothers be selected by the decision and discretion of the brothers.

Therefore, only after the death of Gregory would the monks of St Philip acquire the right to choose their superior. However, this did not happen in reality, since "In the verso notice [of the *Second Testament*], dated to 1107, Gregory, then near death, announces his disappointment at Blasios's failure to return and appoints another nephew, Gregory, as his successor instead",¹⁴⁰

In the *Third Testament* Gregory, probably in order to give greater authority to his choice, mentions Adelasia and Symeon (text C, Chapter 3). However, this relationship gave to the Norman rulers the right to dispose at will of the monastery, as the decision of Roger II to submit St Philip to St Savior of Messina shows.¹⁴¹ St Philip of Fragalà kept a certain independence as *kephalikon* and *autodespoton* monastery, but probably from this moment, in place of the rule drafted by Gregory, the monks had to accept and follow the one established by the Archimandrite Luke.

The *Typikon* of St Nicholas of Casole

The monastery of St Nicholas of Casole, a little village near Otranto, was founded by the monk Joseph, under the patronage of Bohemond, son of Robert Guiscard and Prince of Taranto and of Antioch. We know very little about this monastery whose fame is mainly due to an erudite, Nicholas, a man of great culture which became his abbot in 1219 with the name of Nektarios.¹⁴² It is possible to obtain some information about this monastery from a manuscript now at the Library of the University of Turin, *Taurin. gr.* 216 (former shelfmark: Royal Library Codex C III 17), in which we read a list of the abbots from Joseph, the founder, until Zacharias, commendatory abbot from 1438 to 1469.¹⁴³ Some dependencies of the monastery are also mentioned: Vasto, Policastro, Trulazzo, Melendugno, Alessano, Castro and Minervino. At the time of the abbot Nicholas-Nektarios (1219–35), the monastery was subjected to the archbishop of Otranto, whereas at the end of the fourteenth century it was given to commendatory abbots. Destroyed by the Turks in 1480 and only

partly rebuilt, St Nicholas was occupied by a farm at the end of the nineteenth century,¹⁴⁴ and now its ruins are located, abandoned, on a private property.

Regarding the *typikon* of Casole, the Turin manuscript, its most ancient witness, was severely damaged in the fire that broke out in 1904 in the National Library of Turin. Fortunately, a few years before a copy of it had been made at the Vatican Library, and this copy is now preserved in the Provincial Library of Lecce.¹⁴⁵ Most of the Turin manuscript is occupied by the liturgical *typikon*, in which we find the calendar cycle of fixed feasts in the so-called middle form, similar to the *typikon* of Patir. However, “the commemorations that represent the original core of the menological section of the *typikon* of Casole all come strictly from the Sanctoral used in the *pars Orientis*, without any concession to the local Italo-Greek calendar”.¹⁴⁶ From this point of view, the *typikon* of Casole is very different from the *typika* of the Patir and St Savior, and this justifies its placement in a different tradition not only on geographical terms.

In addition to the liturgical *typikon*, the Turin manuscript also transmits the aforementioned list of the abbots of the monastery, a patriarchal letter addressed to Paul, bishop of Gallipoli,¹⁴⁷ and other short texts that make the codex a kind of “monastic *Thesaurus*”.¹⁴⁸ Furthermore, it is also an important witness to the reception (and the reworking) in Terra d’Otranto of some works by Theodore Stoudite – including the *Epitimia* – in the second half of the twelfth century.¹⁴⁹ As regards the models for the liturgical *typikon*, its heading recalls the traditions of St Saba, of Stoudios and of the Holy Mountain, in the same way as the *typikon* of Luke for the St Savior, quoted above.¹⁵⁰ Just as the *typika* of Rossano and Messina show Stoudite influence, so too does the *typikon* of St Nicholas of Casole,¹⁵¹ even though Agostino Pertusi postulated a stronger link with the Athonite rule.¹⁵²

The only disciplinary text included in the Casole *dossier* in addition to the *Epitimia* is the dietary rule or rather the “*Hypotyposis* concerning food and drink”.¹⁵³ We do not know if it was part of a wider disciplinary *typikon*, but certainly it had more phases of composition – from the time of the founding until the *typikon* drafted in 1160 by Nicholas, the second abbot of the monastery, and beyond – as can be seen, for example, from some reiterations.¹⁵⁴

With regard to the sources, this rule explicitly refers to canon eighty-nine of the Council in Trullo of 692¹⁵⁵ in Chapter 9, in the matter of the fast from the evening of the Great Thursday until Great Saturday late night; Chapter 22 refers to the *typikon* of the Holy Mountain which, however, has no correspondence to the known texts,¹⁵⁶ whereas a later scholiast contests Chapter 25, because in his opinion it is contrary to the tradition of the Fathers. Chapter 11 refers to an observance, namely the blessing after the liturgy of the grape clusters that the monks then eat in church, which presents a feature of agrarian ritual of firstlings offering. This custom – which has a correspondence in the ceremonial of the

Byzantine court – also recalls the aforementioned Council, in particular canon twenty-eight, which allows the priests to bless the grape clusters and then to share them with the faithful, while prohibiting the addition of grape clusters to the offerings for the Eucharistic Sacrifice in order to share them with the faithful during holy Communion.¹⁵⁷

Rules of the *typikon* of Casole mainly regard the monks's diet, but some treat matters related to food but not to diet in the strict sense.¹⁵⁸ The *Hypotyposis* states that the same bread and the same wine are served to monks (Chapter 13), and that during the meal it is forbidden to talk and even to cough “without great necessity” (Chapter 15). Furthermore, when they sit in the refectory, monks make five toasts (Chapter 14), a custom not attested elsewhere:¹⁵⁹ for the Trinity; for the Mother of God; to invoke the “intercession of the holy and God-inspired fathers and for the salvation and benediction of our most holy and spiritual father . . . and of our entire august community in Christ assembled by God”; for dead fathers and brothers and, again, to invoke the intercession of the Mother of God.

If a monk cannot go to the refectory because he must carry out some duty, his share is saved “for him until he returns. If it is food that spoils, it should be given to a sick or elderly brother or to whomever the cellarer wishes. In place of it, something else . . . should be given to him when he returns” (Chapter 21). After a meal, monks cannot go into the cell of a brother, but they have to go to their own cells and dedicate themselves to reading, if they can read, or to prayer or to manual labor (Chapter 20). The dietary rule of Casole provides exemption from fasting during Lent for fishermen, who, however, on Wednesdays and Fridays cannot eat olive oil and fish, whereas on the other days they can eat that freely and also drink wine (Chapter 25). In addition to fishermen the text mentions also the refectorian (τραπεζίτης, Chapter 14) and the cellarer (κελλαρίτης), a synonymous of δοχειάριος, “treasurer”, who decides what to do with uneaten food (Chapter 21).

As regards dietary rules, we read first of all general provisions (Chapters 1–8): absolute prohibition of eating cheese and eggs;¹⁶⁰ basic diet consisting of legumes with olive oil, vegetables and fish; general provisions during Lent and during the fasts of the twelve Holy Apostles and of St Philip; dispensation from fasting on Mondays, Wednesdays and Fridays at feasts of the Lord, of the Mother of God, of the angels, of Saint John, of the twelve Apostles and of any saint commemorated in the monastery and also during the octaves,¹⁶¹ as we read in Chapter 18. On Pentecost Sunday and on the vigils of Christ's birth and of the Epiphany, after the liturgy monks eat the blessed bread and drink one cup of wine in the narthex of the Church. Continuing at Chapter 9 until 12 we read provisions on diet again during Lent, from Easter until the Sunday of All Saints and from the latter until the feast of Holy Apostles Peter and Paul, at the Dormition of the Mother of God and on 14 September, i.e., on the day of the Exaltation of the Cross. Other provisions on diet are discussed

in Chapters 16–19. Dispensation from fasting is allowed from the feast of Christ's birth until the octave of the Epiphany and during the octave of the feasts of the Lord and of the Mother of God.

The *typikon* of Casole presents some aspects that are common on one hand to the liturgical tradition of the *pars Orientis*, on the other to the disciplinary traditions of Italo-Greek monasticism, faithful to the Stoudite model and, conversely, unwilling to incorporate the most recent reforms of Constantinopolitan monasticism, such as the Evergetian. On the other hand, it does not seem, as far as we know, that the dietary rule of Casole has been adopted from or used in other monasteries. Considering its uniqueness, I suggest calling the tradition associated with this text as a tradition “of Casole” more specifically, as opposed to a broader “Otrantine” tradition.

Conclusions

The normative texts here presented, *typika* (Pantelleria, Rossano and Messina), *diathekai* (Fragalà) and *hypotyposis* (Casole), in general appear firmly anchored in what we might call the classical models of Byzantine monasticism, rather than receptive to the influence of the more recent Byzantine monastic reform movement, emphasizing the conservative attitude of this provincial brand of monasticism. Despite this common stance, they do not show evident mutual affinities, which in turn suggests that these texts, as it is perhaps obvious, did not circulate outside of their monasteries, not even towards their Byzantine dependencies for which they were written. By contrast, Luke of Messina, who certainly knew the rules of the Patir, where he came from, expressly states that he used other models for his *typikon*, i.e., those of Stoudios, Mount Athos and Jerusalem.

At the end of our analysis we can confirm that these rules belong in separate groups. However, for some of them I would suggest a different name, still of a geographical nature, but more restrictive: a tradition of Casole, in place of “Otrantine,” and a tradition of Messina, in place of “Calabro-Sicilian”, which includes the *typikon* of Luke and its copies, as well as the *typikon* of St Bartholomew of Trigona. As regards the *typikon* of the Patir and the Testaments of Gregory of Fragalà, I would not speak of traditions at all, since their use, for all we know, appears to be rather limited. Also the *typikon* of Pantelleria is an isolated text, from both geographical and textual points of view.

Notes

- * “The research for this chapter was made possible by a grant from the European Commission, European Social Fund and by Regione Calabria (ROP ESF 2007/2013). The author has sole responsibility for this paper and European

Commission and Regione Calabria decline any responsibility for any further use which may be made of the information contained therein" [declaration in conformity with the norms of the funding received].

- 1 Galatariotou 1987 (with bibliography); Thiermeyer 1992; Mullett 2007.
- 2 Galatariotou 1987, 81–4.
- 3 *BMFD*, 59–66.
- 4 *BMFD*, 637–48.
- 5 I am currently working on the critical edition of the disciplinary *typikon* of the Patir of Rossano.
- 6 That being so, the words *Patire* and *Patirion* are incorrect.
- 7 *BMFD*, 1319–30.
- 8 *BMFD*, 621–36.
- 9 Mercati 1970a, 372–94 and recently Douramani 2003, 20, consider the monastery a foundation from St Bartholomew of Simeri. von Falkenhausen 2000 sheds light on this matter.
- 10 Arranz 1969, IX–XIII; Rougeris 1973, 12–5.
- 11 Giovanelli 1950.
- 12 Parenti 2005, 285–9.
- 13 Pertusi 1972, 482, n. 2; 486.
- 14 Pertusi 1972, 483.
- 15 See Iacopino 2014.
- 16 *Patelarea* in Dujčev 1973, 208; *Patelaria* in Acconcia Longo 1972, 377; *Pantelarea* in von Falkenhausen 1986, 154; *Patellaria* in von Falkenhausen 1991.
- 17 *BMFD*, 59–60; von Falkenhausen 1986, 152–7. Mercati 1970a, 379, considers that the identification with the Island of Pantelleria is doubtful.
- 18 Von Falkenhausen 1986, 154.
- 19 *BMFD*, 62.
- 20 Acconcia Longo 1972, 378.
- 21 Acconcia Longo 1972, 377–8.
- 22 Von Falkenhausen 1991; *BMFD*, 60–1 and n. 8 to Introduction.
- 23 Acconcia Longo 1972, 379–80; von Falkenhausen 1986, 154.
- 24 von Falkenhausen 1986, 157.
- 25 Thomson 1985, 222. Thomson 1985, 229, n. 35, argues against the twelfth-century dating proposed by De Meester 1940.
- 26 The question is not simple. Gianfranco Fiaccadori records three witnesses all dated to the sixteenth and seventeenth centuries: Russian State Library, formerly Theological Academy 54; State Historical Museum, formerly Patriarchal Library, Undol'skij Collection, Syn. 110; Oxford, Bodleian Library 995–92: *BMFD*, 59. Francis J. Thomson assigns instead the second manuscript to c. 1280 and records another witness, transmitted from the so-called Moravian Nomocanon, Lenin State Library, Rumyantsev codex 230, dated to the thirteenth and fourteenth centuries, although he notes that the *typikon* was not present in the original manuscript: Thomson 1985, 229, n. 35.
- 27 On this matter see Torre 2013.
- 28 Thomson 1985, 222.
- 29 Alexander 1985, 64 and n. 13; cf. Alexander 1973, 7–37.
- 30 *BMFD*, 62. Ivan Dujčev's Italian translation [published both in Dujčev 1971, 3–17, and in Dujčev 1973, 208–12] appears in some points imprecise. Here I refer to Gianfranco Fiaccadori's English translation published in *BMFD*, 62–5, which is based on the edition of Mansvetov and is integrated on the basis of the reproductions of the manuscript Bodleian Library (Oxford), 995–92 published in Dujčev 1971, 5–12.
- 31 Chapter numbers refer to *BMFD* translation: *BMFD*, 62–5.

- 32 Von Falkenhausen 1986, 155–6; *BMFD*, 66.
- 33 *BMFD*, 60.
- 34 Cf. *BMFD*, 66.
- 35 *BMFD*, 1716.
- 36 *BMFD*, 60–1, n. 8.
- 37 Burgarella 2003, 124.
- 38 Zaccagni 1996, 213–4; 216. Cf. Burgarella 2005, 102 ff.; Breccia 2005, 21–34.
- 39 Foti 1989, 9–12. Cf. Burgarella 2003, 120–1, 124. On this monastery see Scaduto 1982, 165–243.
- 40 von Falkenhausen 1994, 44–50. The foundation of St Savior is distinguished from that of the other Italo-Greek monasteries founded during the Norman rule for the particular involvement of the sovereign: von Falkenhausen 1977, 214–7; von Falkenhausen 1983b, 782.
- 41 Peters-Custot 2009, 296–303. Most of the monasteries subject to the Archimandrite were founded or refounded by the Hauteville: von Falkenhausen 1994, 48.
- 42 Cf. Scaduto 1982, 187; Lucà 1993, 20.
- 43 von Falkenhausen 1994, 49.
- 44 It is the *Bios* of Bartholomew that suggests, in chapter 13, that the Patir was refounded. In fact, the text refers to a house of prayers – founded years before by a certain monk Niphon and named after the Mother of God and St John the Forerunner – where the saint and his monks lived. Instead, it does not constitute evidence for this issue the reference to Cyriacus, superior of St Mary of Patir, in a document dated 1042 from the archive of St Nicholas of Donnosio (Guillou 1967, 38, n. 3; Peters-Custot 2009, 292, n. 244; *contra* Canart 1978, 103–62). Filippo Burgarella shed light on the identity of this monastery, identifying it with the monastery of St Zachary in the *kastron* of Merkourion, in Valle del Lao: Burgarella 2002a, 84; Burgarella 2003, 121, n. 6.
- 45 Peters-Custot 2009, 294, mistakenly writes Pope Nicholas II.
- 46 Burgarella 2003, 124.
- 47 Peters-Custot 2009, 294, n. 257.
- 48 Burgarella 2003, 125; see also Breccia 2005, 86–8.
- 49 Burgarella 2003, 126 ff.
- 50 On Mount Athos Bartholomew directed for some time – at the request of the κτήτωρ (founder) Basil Calimeris, high dignitary of the Byzantine court – a monastery named after St Basil, known also as τοῦ Καλαβροῦ: Zaccagni 1996, 222; 263–5, nn. 111–18. On Basil Calimeris see Burgarella 2003, 130 ff.
- 51 Von Falkenhausen 1994, 46–7.
- 52 Iordanides 1993–1994, 108; von Stockhausen 2001, 684–5. From the Jena manuscript, codex *Crypt*. 211, *olim* Z.a.XXIX has been copied by Sofronio Gassisi (†1923) at the end of nineteenth century or at the beginning of the twentieth: von Stockhausen 2001, 694.
- 53 Cod. *Jen*. G.b.q.6a, f. 8r (von Stockhausen 2001, 692): Συναξάριον σὺν θεῷ ἡγουν τυπικὸν κανονάριον.
- 54 Iordanides 1993–1994, 108–9.
- 55 von Stockhausen 2001, 694.
- 56 von Stockhausen 2001, 695; Mercati 1970b, 404.
- 57 von Stockhausen 2001, 695; Lucà 1993, 11, n. 42; Iordanides 1993–1994, 110.
- 58 Lucà 1993, 11, n. 42.
- 59 Τοῖς παρ’ αὐτοῦ ἐκτεθεῖσιν ἐνθέοις τύποις τε καὶ κανόσι ρυθμιζόμενά τε καὶ διοικούμενα: Zaccagni 1996, 217.

- 60 Rossi Taibbi 1969, 232–8. On Philagatos *Kerameus* see Torre 2012.
- 61 *BMFD*, 646; Rossi 1902–1903, 82–3.
- 62 Τυπικὸν [. . .] τυπωθὲν παρὰ τοῦ πανοσίου πατρὸς ἡμῶν Βαρθολομαίου ἐν τῇ μονῇ αὐτοῦ, ἣν ἐκ βάθρων ἤγειρε, τῇ ὀνομαζομένῃ Νέα Ὁδηγητρία, καὶ παραδοθὲν παρ’ αὐτοῦ τοῖς ὑπ’ αὐτὸν μοναχοῖς.
- 63 Ἦρεσε τῷ ὁσιωτάτῳ πατρὶ ἡμῶν καὶ τοῦτο.
- 64 Κεφάλαια ἕτερα ἀναγκαϊότατα τοῦ αἰοιδίου πατρὸς ἡμῶν Βαρθολομαίου.
- 65 [Π]αρὰ τοῦ ἀγιωτάτου πατρὸς ἡμῶν τυπωθέν.
- 66 [Ω]ς τυπωθὲν παρὰ τοῦ ἀγίου πατρὸς ἡμῶν· τὰ δὲ τυπικὰ τῶν Στουδίου καὶ τοῦ Ἀγίου Ὁρους ὀρίζονται . . .
- 67 For the correspondences between the *Typikon* of Alexios and the ones of Rossano and Messina see Pentkovskij 2001, 64–81. For the presumed *Typikon* of Stoudios as a model for these texts see Krausmüller-Grinchenko 2013, 154–60. This question appears to be very complex, so I intend to treat it in a separate study. Theodore Stoudite’s *Epitimia* transmitted from the *typikon* of the Patir are in part different from the text printed in PG 99, 1733–57: Morini 2001, 145–51; Arnesano 2010, 24, n. 92. Two of the *Epitimia* transmitted from the Jena manuscript correspond instead to those copied in the manuscript *Taurin*. C III 17 (*typikon* of Casole): Arnesano 2010, 22; 26–7. For a comparison between the texts of the *Epitimia* included in the *typika* of Patir and of Casole see Arnesano 2014.
- 68 This word is not attested elsewhere. I suggest connecting it to προαστίτης, ὁ, “Vorstadtbewohner”, “suburban resident” (LBG online: <http://stephanus.tlg.uci.edu/lbg/#eid=59993&context=lsj&action=from-search>) and therefore to translate it as “suburban residents,” i.e., laymen who work in the properties of the monastery. On the *prastetai* see below, p. 56.
- 69 Cod. Jen. G.b.q.6a, f. 167r: Ὁ δὲ ἅγιος Θεόδωρος ὁ Στουδίτης, τοῦτο μεμφόμενος καὶ ἀποπεμπαῖον [ἀποπεμπ(τέ)ον: Pertusi] ποιῶν, τοιαῦτα φησὶν [τοιαῦτά φησιν: Pertusi]· ὁ ἀδελφός σου εἰς τὸ ἔργον, καὶ σὺ εἰς τὸ καὶ τὸ ἡ ὥς εἰς μάθημα [omittit Pertusi], ἢ εἰς τι [εἰς τί cod.] τῶν ἀναπαυσίμων ἔργων. Cf. Pertusi 1972, 487.
- 70 Arranz 1969, 411: “gateaux bénis avant la liturgie”.
- 71 Cod. Jen. G.b.q.6a, f. 164r – v: Τῶν δὲ μικρῶν ἁγίων εἰ μὲν ἐν τετράδει ἢ παρασκευῇ τύχη ἢ τούτων μνήμη, τῇ ἐπαύριον εἰς τὴν λειτουργίαν γίνεσθαι τὰ τούτων κόλλυβα κατὰ τὴν παράδοσιν τῶν εὐαγίων μοναστηρίων τῆς πόλεως· Εἰ δὲ ἐν ἄλλῃ τῆς ἑβδομάδος ἡμέρᾳ τύχη ἡγουν ἐν δευτέρᾳ, ἢ τρίτῃ, ἢ πέμπτῃ, ἢ σαββάτῳ, ἢ κυριακῇ γίνεσθαι ἀφ’ ἐσπέρας, κατὰ τὴν παράδοσιν τῆς χώρας ἡμῶν.
- 72 Cod. Jen. G.b.q.6a, f. 161r: τὰ δὲ προηγιασμένα γίνεται πᾶσαν τὴν ἁγίαν τεσσαρακοστήν τρίτην καὶ πέμπτῃν, χωρὶς τῶν ἡμερῶν ὧν δηλοῖ τὸ τυπικὸν τῆς ἐκκλησίας. Cf. Nedungatt and Featherstone 1995, 133.
- 73 *Corpus Juris Civilis*, Nov. CXXIII 34.7–10. Cf. Morini 1999, 314.
- 74 Cod. Jen. G.b.q.6a, f. 171r: ἢ ἐκεῖνον ἐφ’ ὃν πάντες γεγονάσιν ὁμογνώμονες, [. . .], ἢ τῶν ἐγνωσιμῶν δηλαδὴ τριῶν ἕνα ἐξ ὧν αὐτοὶ ἐξελέξαντο.
- 75 Cod. Jen. G.b.q.6a, f. 171v: θρέμμα καὶ παιδεύμα τῆς εὐαγεστάτης ταύτης μονῆς.
- 76 Morini 1991, 9–14; Morini 1999, 314. Athanasios’ rule instead considers adequate a two- or three-years stay at the Lavra: *BMFD*, 255–6.
- 77 Cod. Jen. G.b.q.6a, f. 172r: Οὕτως ἐπὶ τὸ κρεῖττον ὁδεύσειεν ἡ μονή, οὕτως ἀνθήσειεν, οὕτως καρποὺς ὠραίους ἐνέγκοιεν, καὶ πάντα ἔξοι καλῶς, δυνάμει μὲν τοῦ τῶν ὧν δημιουργοῦ καὶ συνεχέως Θεοῦ, εὐμενείᾳ δὲ τοῦ ἐνταῦθα τιμωμένου ἀγίου Προδρόμου καὶ ἀντιλήπτορος καὶ βοηθοῦ ἡμῶν.
- 78 *BMFD*, 69.
- 79 Von Falkenhausen 1977, 217; von Falkenhausen 1994, 45.

- 80 Trinchera 1865, 138–41 (*praesertim* 140).
- 81 Cf. von Falkenhausen 1977, 217; Breccia 2005, 96.
- 82 Morini 1991, 14–18; Iordanides 1993–1994, 112–13.
- 83 Cf. Morini 1991, 17, n. 48.
- 84 Cod. *Jen.* G.b.q.6a, f. 161v: καὶ τοῦ εὐαγγελισμοῦ τὰς τρεῖς ἡμέρας· τὸ προεόρτιον καὶ τὴν ἑορτὴν καὶ μεθεορτον. Cf. Douramani 2003, 304: Ἀλα αννουντζιαντζιονι, σε ακκαδερα φορα δι λα σιμανα σαντα, λι τρε γιορνι, αλο προεορτιο αλα φεστα ετ αλο μεθεορτιο, κομε αλι σαββατι εδ δομινικι.
- 85 Cod. *Jen.* G.b.q.6a, f. 161r: ἀνὰ πέντε ἰσχάδες. Cf. Douramani 2003, 304: when monks celebrate the Presanctified σε δονα αδ οννιουνο δελι φρατι λα μιτα δε λο πανε ετ φρουττι γρανати, ετ τζιρκα τζινκουε φηκα. Cf. Mortari 1991, 21–6.
- 86 Nedungatt and Featherstone 1995, 133.
- 87 Cod. *Jen.* G.b.q.6a, f. 162r – v: ἐσθίειν δὲ ἡμᾶς εἴτε ὁ ἀναστὰς ἐκ νεκρῶν αὐτοφυὲς πέμψει ἡμῖν ἑτοιμον προπαρασκευασθὲν παρὰ τῶν οἰκονόμων τῇ τοῦ ἡγουμένου προστάξει, εἴτε ἰχθῦες πηκτοὶ ἢ τηγανισμένοι, ἢ σκηπέκιν, ἢ γαλατίτζιν, ἢ τυρίον χλωρόν, ἢ ἀνθότυρον.
- 88 *BMFD*, 644. Cf. *BMFD*, 628, 631.
- 89 *BMFD*, 1324.
- 90 Cod. *Jen.* G.b.q.6a, f. 163v: Τὴν πρώτην ἐβδομάδα τῆς τεσσαρακοστῆς τῶν Ἀγίων Αποστόλων δεῖ τηρεῖν ταύτην ἀγνὴν καὶ καθαρὰν ἐκ πάντων· τοῦτο δὲ καὶ μόνον παραχωροῦμεν ἡγουν πρὸς παραμυθίαν μικράν, τρίτην καὶ πέμπτην ἀνὰ μίαν μέτραν κρασίου, καὶ τοῦτο διὰ τοὺς ῥαθύμους; f. 165v: Τὴν πρώτην ἐβδομάδα τῆς τεσσαρακοστῆς τοῦ ἁγίου Φιλίππου, δεῖ τηρεῖν ταύτην ἀγνὴν καὶ καθαρὰν ἐκ πάντων· τοῦτον μόνον παραχωροῦμεν πρὸς παραμυθίαν μικράν τρίτην καὶ πέμπτην ἀνὰ μίαν μέτραν κρασίου καὶ τοῦτο διὰ τοὺς ῥαθύμους
- 91 Cod. *Jen.* G.b.q.6a, f. 162v: Ὅρίζομεν δὲ καὶ [...] ἵνα ἀπὸ τῆς Κυριακῆς τῶν Βαΐων ἄχρι τῆς Πεντεκοστῆς εἴτε κρατήσῃ ὁ τῆς μονῆς γρίπος, ἵνα ἔσται εἰς ἀνάπαυσιν τῶν ἀδελφῶν, καὶ τῶν ἀρρώστων, καὶ τῶν παραβαλλόντων φίλων ἡμῶν [...] δὲ ἄδειαν τὸν οἰκόνομον πιπράσκειν ἐξ αὐτῶν, [...] καὶ δηναρίου ἑνός.
- 92 Cf. above, n. 35.
- 93 Iordanides 1993–1994, 117.
- 94 *BMFD*, 228; 632; 636 [n. B9]. On the prohibition of private possessions in the so-called non-aristocratic *typika* see Galatariotou 1987, 124–9.
- 95 Iordanides 1993–1994, 113.
- 96 Cf. Cavarra 1991, 31–5.
- 97 Iordanides 1993–1994, 115. On administration in the so-called non-aristocratic *typika* see Galatariotou 1987, 129–31.
- 98 Cavarra 1991, 35–6. Cf. Leroy 1954. On work and professions in Calabria see Burgarella 1993.
- 99 Re 1990; Re 2000, 249–78.
- 100 Arranz 1969, XIV–XVIII.
- 101 Rossi 1902–1903, 71–84; *BMFD*, 637–48.
- 102 Arranz 1969, XIV, raises doubts about this matter.
- 103 *BMFD*, 638.
- 104 In fact the text that we read in Douramani 2003, 303, includes texts ed. by Arranz 1969, 293, as AP 20, 18 and 19, whereas in Douramani 2003, 307–8, AP 27–33 are followed by AP 36.
- 105 Douramani 2003, 316–20.
- 106 Re 1990, 148–53; Lucà 1993, 72–3.
- 107 *BMFD*, 67–83. Cf. Delouis 2008; Delouis 2009.
- 108 Galatariotou 1987, 87.

- 109 Luzzi 2002, 232–4.
- 110 Dirk Krausmüller defines the *typikon* of St Savior of Messina, as well as that of the Patir of Rossano “a reworking of the eleventh-century redaction of the Stoudite *Hypotyposis*”: Krausmüller 2006–2007, 260.
- 111 *BMFD*, 640.
- 112 Douramani 2003, 295: Ρεγουλι κουαλι κον ββεβητα τραττανο δελο ορδινε σολιτο δελλο οφφιτζιο εκκλησιαστικο; Douramani 2003, 316: Κανονι λη κουαλη τραττανο δελ ορδινε μοναστικο.
- 113 Douramani 2003, 306: ετ και αλτρο μανδερα λα τρασφιγουρατζιονε Χριστω.
- 114 Douramani 2003, 307–11.
- 115 Douramani 2003, 311–12.
- 116 Cf. *BMFD*, 114–15.
- 117 Douramani 2003, 311: λο διβηνο ετ γρανδε αββιτο.
- 118 Douramani 2003, 312.
- 119 Mercati 1970a; Douramani 2003, 316–20.
- 120 Cf. *BMFD*, 79 (Chapter 21).
- 121 Cf. *BMFD*, 78 (Chapter 18).
- 122 Douramani 2003, 318.
- 123 Cf. *BMFD*, 78 (Chapters 9, 15, 17).
- 124 Douramani 2003, 319. On sexuality in the so-called non-aristocratic *typika* see Galatariotou 1987, 121–4.
- 125 Cf. *BMFD*, 108 (Chapter 25).
- 126 Cf. *BMFD*, 609; 641; 644 (Chapter 3); 680 (Chapter 17); 1884.
- 127 Cf. *BMFD*, 79 (Chapter 19).
- 128 Re 1990, 90–1.
- 129 Scaduto 1982, 102.
- 130 *BMFD*, 628 [A2]; 630–1 [B2]; Scaduto 1982, 103; von Falkenhausen 1983a, 178.
- 131 Letters and chapter numbers refer to *BMFD* translation: *BMFD*, 628–34 (A= First Testament; B= Second Testament; C= Third Testament).
- 132 On these officials see von Falkenhausen 2009, 169–73; 175–6.
- 133 Becker 2013, nn. 13, 16, 26, 45, 46, 58, 66.
- 134 Cf. von Falkenhausen 1998, 105–15, nn. 1, 2, 6, 11, 12, 27, 29, 30, 35; Pirrotti 2008, 196–7.
- 135 The Second Testament, dated to 1105, is a revision of the first one, dated to 1096–7, and is addressed to the monastic community, whereas recipients of the Third Testament, also dated to 1105, are probably the public authorities: von Falkenhausen 2009, 171–2 [the two Testaments here mentioned as First and Second correspond to *BMFD* B and C].
- 136 Cf. von Falkenhausen 1977, 212, n. 54.
- 137 *First Testament*, Chapters 4–5. *Second Testament*, Chapters 4–5.
- 138 This prohibition is mentioned explicitly only in the *Testaments* of Gregory and in the *Typikon* of Luke of Messina: *BMFD*, 647 [3].
- 139 Von Falkenhausen 1983b, 781.
- 140 *BMFD*, 623. Cf. von Falkenhausen 1983a, 185.
- 141 *BMFD*, 623.
- 142 On the monastery of Casole see Hoeck and Loenertz 1965, 9–22; Kölzer 1985; *BMFD*, 1319–20. On the Abbot Nicholas-Nektarios see Arnesano – Sciarra 2010, 433–40 (with bibliography).
- 143 Hoeck and Loenertz 1965, 11–16.
- 144 *BMFD*, 1319–20.
- 145 Luzzi 2002, 231–2.
- 146 Luzzi 2002, 237.

- 147 Cf. Jacob 1987.
- 148 Arnesano 2010, 12.
- 149 Arnesano 2010, 22; 26–7.
- 150 Cf. above, p. 00.
- 151 Pertusi 1972, 489–90.
- 152 Pertusi 1972, 491.
- 153 Ὑποτύποις περὶ βρώσεως καὶ πόσεως: Cozza-Luzi 1905, 155.
- 154 *BMFD*, 1320–1. Chapter numbers refer to the *BMFD* English translation: *BMFD*, 1324–8.
- 155 Cf. Nedungatt and Featherstone 1995, 169.
- 156 *BMFD*, 1321; 1329, nn. 8, 12.
- 157 Burgarella 2002b, 47–8; Nedungatt and Featherstone 1995, 102–3. Filippo Burgarella, whom I would like to thank for these details, remarks that “Chapter 11 of the *Typikon* of Casole complies with canon twenty-eight of the Council in Trullo or *Penthekte*. Blessing of the grape clusters should be strictly distinguished from the liturgy, therefore, it takes place after the liturgy and the consummation of the grapes follows that of the *klaston*, *antidoron* in the current language, *eulogia* in the traditional one. The Latin translation by Cozza-Luzi, *panem benedictum*, is ambiguous, since it can mislead to equate it with the Latin host. It is instead the bread broken, *klaston* indeed, which is part of the bread from which it was derived, the part that, during the divine liturgy, is sanctified”.
- 158 For parallels with other Monastic Foundation Documents see *BMFD*, 1329–30.
- 159 *BMFD*, 1330, n. [14].
- 160 This is why the so-called week of Cheese fare here is the week of Cheese fast: Chapter 19.
- 161 Octave (*oktoemera*). The week after a feast or the eighth day after the feast marking the closure (*apodosis*) of the festival as at *BMFD*, 1686.

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3 Greek monasticism in Campania and Latium from the tenth to the fifteenth century

Vera von Falkenhausen

Greek monasticism in Latium and Campania was a consequence of immigration. During the seventh century, after the Persian and then Arab conquest of Syria, Palestine and Egypt, many Greek-speaking and pre-vaillingly orthodox inhabitants of these regions emigrated – in general via North Africa – to Italy. They settled especially in Sicily and in those areas of southern and central Italy not yet occupied by the Lombards. Many of them came to Rome, where Greek-speakers were in demand not only to improve communication with the Byzantine government in Constantinople, but also to participate in theological discussions on Monothelitism.¹ In this period many Greek monasteries were founded in Rome;² learned Greek theologians participated actively at the Lateran Synod of 649,³ and Greek-speaking popes ran the Roman Church from 642 to 752.⁴

After the Arab conquest of Sicily a second wave of Greek immigrants arrived in Latium and Campania. In fact, during the tenth and early eleventh centuries many Greek refugees from Sicily and Calabria moved north, for the continuous Arab raids had detrimental effects on the local economy and made daily life difficult. Most of the refugees settled in the Lombard principalities of Benevento, Capua and Salerno, where apparently they were welcome and could be integrated into the local economy, but some of them moved even further north to Latium. The presence of Greek peasants, artisans, clerics and monks in these areas is well attested by the archival documents of the most important Benedictine abbeys in these provinces, as for instance Montecassino,⁵ Santa Trinità of Cava,⁶ Montevergine⁷ and others,⁸ but the Greek immigration is also described in the monastic hagiography of that period: there are, for instance, the *Vitae* of St Sabas the Younger, a Sicilian monk, who died in Rome in 990, and his father and brother;⁹ those of St Gregory of Cassano, a monk from Calabria, who eventually became the first abbot of a Greek monastery in Burtscheid, near Aachen († before 1000);¹⁰ those of St Adalbert of Prague († 997);¹¹ those of St Nilus of Rossano, founder of the monastery of Grottaferrata close to Rome († 1004),¹² and of his disciple, St Bartholomew, third abbot of the same monastery († ca. 1050).¹³

In the tenth century, some of the ancient and well-established Greek monasteries in Rome, as for instance St Caesarius on the Palatine,¹⁴ St Sabas¹⁵ and St Anastasius *ad Aquas Salvias*,¹⁶ were still operative and inhabited by Greek monks, often pilgrims from the East, while Sts Boniface and Alexius on the Aventine had been founded in 977 by an eminent emigré from Syria, the metropolitan Sergius of Damascus, and was inhabited by Greek – often Calabrian – and Latin monks.¹⁷ Greek monasteries existed also in Naples, where the city's clergy is described as *Graeca Latinaque pars sacerdotalis et monachica turba*.¹⁸ In the tenth and eleventh centuries, there were at least five Greek houses: Sts Theodore and Sebastian (which was united with Sts Sergius and Bacchus), St Anastasius, St Anthony, St Demetrius and the nunnery of Sts Marcellinus and Peter; but, apparently, they were in general inhabited by local abbots and monks or nuns who signed documents in Latin, although their signatures were frequently written in Greek characters, a common usage in medieval Naples. At the end of the tenth century, however, the abbots and monks of these monasteries began to write their signatures in Greek characters and language as well. Presumably fresh immigrants from Calabria and Sicily had joined the monastic communities.¹⁹

Some of the immigrants from Sicily and Calabria founded new Greek churches and monasteries in their new homeland. For the tenth and twelfth centuries we know of rural Greek monasteries in the Cilento, just North of Calabria, where many Greeks had settled, and where the linguistic impact of Greek is still perceptible in the local dialects.²⁰ For instance, St Maria *de Pactano*,²¹ St Barbara, St Marina, St Maurus, St George,²² and St Onuphrius near Petina.²³ St John *secus mare*²⁴ and St Nicholas of Gallucanta were founded near Vietri at the Amalfitan coast,²⁵ and close to Pontecorvo there were St Peter and St Paul de Foresta.²⁶ There was in Nepi the Greek nunnery of Sts Blasius and Maria,²⁷ and St Nilus, who had lived with his monks for some fifteen years in Valleluce, a dependency of Montecassino, in ca. 995 moved first to Serperi close to Gaeta, then to the Greek monastery of St Agata near Tusculum before he founded Grottaferrata.²⁸

Some of the Greek churches or monasteries were established on the private property of the founder. Thus

*Leo, qui fuit ortus ex finibus Calabriae et nunc est Longobardus, filius quondam Sisini, inspirante divina clementia, pro suis delictis et anime suorum parentum, vellet in honorem Beatissimi Confessoris et ipsius domini nostri Iesu Christi, ecclesiam construere in proprio domo sua, quibus ipse pertinentem habet intus nobam Beneventanam civitatem, iuxta plateam publicam que pergit ante ecclesiam Sancte Tecele . . . illam vult consecrare in honore beati Nicolay confessoris et episcopi.*²⁹

Transl.: Leo who was born in Calabria and is now a Lombard, son of Sisininus [probably Sisinnios], inspired by divine mercy wants to build a church in honour of the most blessed confessor of our lord Jesus Christ in the house he owns in the new city of Benevento, close to the public square in front of the church of St Thecla . . . he wants to consecrate the church to the holy confessor and bishop Nicholas.

The church was then called St Nicholas *de Grecis*.³⁰ More often, however, the land for the construction of a church or the establishment of a monastery, or even an existing church, was given to a Greek monk or to a group of monks by a Lombard landowner or lord. In January 986, Jaquintus, a landowner of Salerno, and his nephews bestowed their *Eigenkirche* (proprietary church) of St John *secus mare* near Vietri with its land for life on two Greek monks, who for their part donated to the same church the moveables: liturgical manuscripts and precious garments, chandeliers and some livestock. Abbot Sabas and the monk Cosmas signed the contract in Greek.³¹ In a like manner, in November 998, count Guido of Pontecorvo donated to *abbas Jacobus de genere Grecorum* a piece of land *in deserto et vasto loco ubi dicitur ab ipsa Foresta* where the Greek abbot was to establish a monastery dedicated to St Peter.³² In a written agreement of 1018, abbot Leontios declares that count Alfanus and his nephews had given him some land in the plains below the Monti Alburni to build within five years a church dedicated to St Onuphrius, to gather monks to officiate the church, to administer the landed property and to construct new buildings and mills. Previously the land had been bestowed on another Greek named Cosmas.³³ The foundation of St Nilus's monastery at Grottaferrata was sponsored by Gregory, count of Tusculum.³⁴

It is quite obvious that in the second half of the tenth century Greek monasticism was fashionable in Italy. Apparently the ascetic ideals of the Greek monastic tradition appealed to many Italians: the Amalfitans had founded a monastery on Mount Athos; Adalbert of Prague, appalled by the way of life of the monks of Montecassino, wanted to join a Greek monastic community;³⁵ and in fact some Benedictines of Montecassino left the abbey for a more ascetic life on Mount Sinai and Mount Athos.³⁶ Thus, even some Lombards chose to take the monastic habit in one of the new Greek monasteries in Campania: in a document of 979, Adelferius, son of a Lombard judge and monk in St Lawrence near Salerno, declared that he lived under the rule of abbot Nicodemus (*sub huius regula permaneo*), who signed the document in Greek.³⁷ On the other hand even some Latin monasteries in Italy had Greek abbots: in the years 982–988 the learned John Philagathos from Rossano Calabro was abbot of the Benedictine abbey of Nonantola, and eventually in 997 became pope as John XVI (antipope),³⁸ whilst from 1036 to 1038 Basilius, a Calabrian Greek, was abbot of Montecassino,³⁹ though in both cases political connections had helped them reach the top of their monastic/ecclesiastical careers.

There were, in fact, other, less spiritual reasons which could have convinced the owners of *Eigenkirchen* to entrust them to Greek monks. As in the case of St Peter *de Foresta*, they may have hoped that the newcomers might cultivate the wasteland and thus improve the value of the property. Moreover, some of the immigrant monks were quite wealthy: Leontios, the abbot of St Onuphrios of Petina, promised to pay an annual *census* to the Lombard count, and at his death to leave half of his belongings (*de omnia mea causa medietatem*) to the monastery.⁴⁰ Other monks donated to their new churches the treasures of their former monastery in Calabria: a friend of St Sabas the Younger, for instance, transferred the treasure of the saint's Calabrian monastery to Amalfi to save any worthy heirlooms from the Arab raids.⁴¹ The inventory of the moveable property of St Nicholas of Gallucanta near Vietri from 1057 mentions a great number of silk garments, fifteen mainly liturgical Greek manuscripts, many precious icons (one in mosaic and eleven from Constantinople *depictas auro*), twenty-seven glass chandeliers from Constantinople, four ostrich eggs and many other highly valuable items which could not easily have been found in such a small place in Campania.⁴² Finally, the Greek monks were foreigners without family connections and social networks in the local aristocracy. Thus by installing a Greek priest or monk the lay owner would not easily lose control over his church and its landed property.

Normally the Lombard owners of a church guaranteed that the monks should live according to a Greek rule,⁴³ and that the liturgy should be celebrated in Greek. Thus in 1058 Theophilos, the new abbot of St Nicholas of Gallucanta, promised "that, so long as I live, . . . I will conduct or make others fulfill the daily office to God by day and night, as is appropriate for Greek clergy".⁴⁴ Culturally, however, the Greek monks in Latium and Campania lived in a diaspora. Although in their monasteries they celebrated the liturgy in Greek, composed and sang Greek hymns and copied and read Greek manuscripts, the social, ecclesiastical and political context around them was Latin.⁴⁵ In the Lombard principalities and in Latium the local bishops belonged to the jurisdiction of the Roman Church, and all lawsuits concerning the property of the Greek monasteries were conducted in Latin by local judges,⁴⁶ and all legal documents were written in Latin by local notaries. Sometimes the abbot or monks signed a document in Greek,⁴⁷ and sometimes on the verso of the Latin documents there are annotations in Greek referring to the contents.⁴⁸ This situation favoured a certain bilingualism among the Greek monks. According to his *Vita*, St Nilus had discussed in Latin (τῇ ῥωμαϊκῇ γλώσσῃ)⁴⁹ with monks of Montecassino problems concerning monastic ideals and controversies in the ecclesiastical traditions,⁵⁰ and in some Greek manuscripts still preserved in the library of Grottaferrata there are Latin translations of Greek texts and Latin annotations written by Greek monks.⁵¹

Nevertheless many of them felt they were strangers: the scribe Nicholas – modestly styling himself *κακιγράφος* – who in the beginning of the eleventh century in Campania copied a Menologion (cod. Vat. gr. 866), invoked the saints Samonas, Abibas and Gurias to help him to return home soon from foreign lands (*ἀναρῶσεσθε τὸ τάχος τῆς ξενίας ὁδηγοῦντες με πάλιν ἐν τῇ πατρίδι*).⁵² Nilus himself, when he was still living at Valletuce, a dependency of Montecassino, in a dialogue with Adalbert of Prague alluded to the awkward situation of being a foreigner, saying: *ut iste habitus et intonse barbe pili testantur, non indigena sed homo Graecus sum. Terra autem quantulumque est, quam ego et mei mecum incolunt, illorum sanctorum seniorum et fratrum . . . propria est*.⁵³ If he did anything that did not please the Benedictines, who owned the land, he and his monks would be expelled.⁵⁴ According to his *Vita*, on his deathbed he confessed that he had been a foreigner all his life: *καὶ γὰρ ξένος ἐγενόμην πάσας τὰς ἡμέρας ἃς ἔζησα*.⁵⁵ *Ξενιτεία*, however, was one of the ascetic ideals of Byzantine monasticism. Thus a similar feeling of non-belonging is expressed in a positive sense in the preface to the *Vita* of St Bartholomew the Younger, third abbot of Grottaferrata. According to his anonymous hagiographer Bartholomew was all the more admirable, since he revealed his sanctity not in his own country and among people of the same language, but among persons of a different language and in a foreign environment (*ὅτι οὐκ ἐν τῇ ἰδίᾳ, οὐτ' ἐφ' ὁμογλώσσοις, ἀλλ' ἐν ἑτερογλώσσοις*).⁵⁶

As to their cultural level, some of the Greek monks were quite uneducated as attested not only by their awkward signatures,⁵⁷ but also by stories told in hagiography. Stephen, one of the favourite disciples of St Nilus, to the exasperation of his learned saintly master, was rather stupid, neither capable nor inclined to improve his education,⁵⁸ and there were other monks in the same community so slow at learning quotations or verses from the sacred hymns that their spiritual father wrote the texts for them to memorize on small pieces of parchment, which he attached to their necks or arms.⁵⁹ Others, however, were well educated even before they became monks, as for instance Proklos, described in the same *Vita* as a man *τῆς ἐγκυκλίου παιδεύσεως σφόδρα πεπειρασμένος, βιβλίων τε τῶν ἔξωθεν καὶ τῶν ἡμετέρων ἐνδιαθέτων* (transl.: well educated in all branches of knowledge, having read secular and ecclesiastical books),⁶⁰ and St Nilus himself. As attested by his *Vita* and from his autograph manuscripts, Nilus was an eager and devoted scribe,⁶¹ but he was also a gifted hymnographer.⁶² He was, however, not alone: during the tenth, eleventh and twelfth centuries many Greek liturgical and patristic texts (mainly) were copied in Campania and at Grottaferrata.⁶³ Some of these are now preserved in the libraries of Grottaferrata, Montecassino, the Vatican and elsewhere; few have remained in Campania, but recently in a private archive at Teggiano in the Cilento several folios of a Greek *menaion* have been found.⁶⁴ Some manuscripts, however, were destroyed

by careless abbots,⁶⁵ or by fanatical Latin bishops.⁶⁶ In Grottaferrata, the hymnographic tradition was continued by Nilus's successors, the abbots of Grottaferrata Paul and Bartholomew,⁶⁷ and perhaps by Stephen, who mentions in his hymns on Pope Gregory I and on the translation of the relics of St Nicholas to Bari Ῥώμη καὶ Ἰτάλια (*sic*) καὶ Καμπανία . . . σὺν χώραις ταῖς πέριξ, and τῶν Λογγιβάρδων τοὺς λαοὺς,⁶⁸ was also a monk of Grottaferrata. Moreover in the Greek monasteries in Campania and Latium the Latin hagiographical texts of local saints were translated into Greek, as for instance the *Vitae* of St Caesarius of Terracina⁶⁹ and St Erasmus of Formia.⁷⁰

After the Norman conquest of Southern Italy and Sicily, Greek immigration from Calabria to Campania apparently came to an end. In fact, the Arab incursions, which were the main reason for abandoning the native province, had ceased. Some refugee families even returned to their former homes, though only one case is securely attested by two sixteenth- and seventeenth-century manuscripts that preserve in Italian translation the testament of the Greek hieromonk Paul (†before 1085), founder of the monastery of the Holy Trinity close to Seminara in southern Calabria.⁷¹ In the Byzantine tradition,⁷² the text of Paul's monastic testament was introduced by a short autobiographical note. Because of the continuous Arab raids his family had abandoned their home in Calabria and moved to Salerno. Since his childhood he had been educated at Grottaferrata and had become a monk under the third abbot Bartholomew (†ca. 1050). After his ordination, he left his monastery to visit his mother in Salerno, from where both traveled to Calabria to inspect the family property situated close to Seminara. Paul decided to stay, and after initial difficulties he founded a monastery of his own, dedicated to the Holy Trinity, which even benefitted from donations by Roger I. The monastery must have been quite prosperous, for it had at its disposal forty-six *villeins*.⁷³ After Paul's death, however, the count gave the monastery to one of his own foundations, the Augustinian abbey of Bagnara.⁷⁴

Many Greeks remained in Campania, and during the twelfth and thirteenth centuries *Graeci*⁷⁵ and persons with names like *Zura Maria* or *Leo de Zuru Basilu* – from the Greek κύρα (lady) or κύρ (lord) – continued to be mentioned in local documents.⁷⁶ In 1213 a Latin document from Auletta was signed in Greek by Πέτρος κρητης Ολεττε;⁷⁷ and still in the fourteenth century quite a number of churches in the dioceses of Montecassino, Benevento, Salerno and Capaccio were said to be *de Graecis* or *Graecorum*.⁷⁸ Nevertheless, the Greek communities in Campania diminished, since there were no new arrivals from Calabria, and some local Greeks gradually had become integrated – perhaps through intermarriage – into the Latin-Lombard society. The demographic situation had a decisive impact on the decline of Greek monasticism in Campania: in fact, there were fewer and fewer vocations and benefactors. In Naples, for instance, the signatures in Greek by monks and *hegoumenoi* of the Greek

monasteries disappear during the second quarter of the twelfth century, the last being that of Νικωδιμος ηγουμενος of Sts Sergius and Bacchus of 1126;⁷⁹ his successors, Boniface (1132–1136) and John (1137–1138), are called *abbas*, which may signify that in the meantime the monastery had been latinized.⁸⁰

Moreover, one of the major aims of the so-called Gregorian Church Reform was the abolition of *Eigenkirchen* (proprietary churches).⁸¹ Thus, during the late eleventh and twelfth centuries many monasteries, Latin and Greek, were donated by the Norman and Lombard feudal lords and landowners to the most important Benedictine abbeys, as for instance Cava or Montecassino. In 1075–1076 Goffredus duke of Gaeta and count of Pontecorvo donated St Peter *de Foresta*, whose last abbots *de genere Graecorum* were Sabas (1066–1067) and Jonas (1071), to Montecassino.⁸² Giovanni Vitolo has shown how during the years between 1087 and 1151 the various members of the Lombard family who owned the Greek monastery of St Nicholas of Gallucanta at Vietri one after the other ceded their shares to the abbey of Cava,⁸³ even though in 1092 one member of the family, owner of 50% of the monastery, had promised “*ut nec ille nec eius heredes quolibet tempore iamdictam medietatem suprascripti monasterii cum medietate ex ipsis rebus continentibus subtrahere de ordine Grecorum monachorum*” (transl.: that neither he nor his heirs will ever remove from the order of the Greek monks the aforesaid half of the monastery with half of all its possessions).⁸⁴ The same fate befell the nearby monastery of St John *secus mare* in the last decades of the eleventh century.⁸⁵ In this same period two monasteries in the Cilento, St Marina and St Barbara close to Novi and St Mary of Pertosa near Auletta were given to Cava, and, soon after the incorporation into the possessions of the Benedictine abbey, these Greek monasteries were run by Latin priors.⁸⁶ Among the few Greek monasteries in Campania which remained independent was St Mary of Pattano: in 1273 abbot Elias signed a Latin document in Greek,⁸⁷ and in 1368 the monk James was promoted to abbot of Grottaferrata by Pope Urban V.⁸⁸

When in 1457–1458 by order of pope Calixtus III a pontifical commission, led by Athanasios Chalkeopoulos, a monk of Constantinopolitan origin, visited the remaining Greek monasteries in Southern Italy, only four were left in Campania, all situated in the province of Salerno: St Mary *de Centula*, St Conos *de Camarota*, St John *ad Pirum* and St Mary *de Pactano*, which the visitors found in a rather desolate state. In St Mary *de Centula* and St Conos *de Camarota* there were by now Latin abbots, St Conos having been bought by an Augustinian monk from his Greek predecessor, who had destroyed a number of manuscripts, and had then moved together with his *femina* and sons to Santa Severina.⁸⁹ In St John *ad Pirum* the monk Joachim insulted cardinal Bessarion and wondered whether he was really a Christian since he came from Turkey.⁹⁰ Finally in St Mary *de Pactano* they found the Greek abbot and two monks together

with more than twenty laymen, all heavily armed and in possession of an important arsenal. During the examination of the monks, the visitors were driven out of the monastery by force, though in the end the abbot apologized.⁹¹ With regard to Latium, in 1053, in a letter to the patriarch of Constantinople, Michael Keroularios, Pope Leo IX wrote that *intra et extra Romam plurima Graecorum reperiuntur monasteria et ecclesiae*,⁹² but without giving any names. In Roman documents of the twelfth century the monastery of St Caesarius on the Palatine is still called *Graecorum* or *de Graecis*,⁹³ and there may have been others, but we do not know whether Greek monks actually lived there, nor whether the Greek liturgy was still celebrated.⁹⁴

In this scenario of general decline of Greek monasticism in this area, the great exception was Grottaferrata: under the protection of the Tusculan popes the monastery had become rich, in contrast to the sometimes quite modest rural Greek *Eigenklöster*. In addition to the landed property in the hinterland of Rome, Grottaferrata owned land and *metochia* in Campania and Calabria.⁹⁵ In 1131, Roger II had donated the *metochion* of St Mary of Rufrano, south-east of Salerno.⁹⁶ Moreover, Grottaferrata was exempt from the authority of the local bishop.⁹⁷ During the twelfth and thirteenth centuries, the monastery commissioned and collected Greek liturgical, musical and patristic manuscripts,⁹⁸ attracting learned Greek monks from Calabria, as for instance Makarios of Reggio⁹⁹ and John of Rossano,¹⁰⁰ who copied Greek manuscripts and wrote Greek hagiography and hymns. The bilingual and often well-educated monks were used in the pontifical diplomatic service in missions to Byzantium: abbot Nicholas was sent by Pope Urban II to Constantinople in 1088, and perhaps even a second time by Paschal II in 1112.¹⁰¹ "A certain golden cup, which it is said the Emperor of Constantinople once gave to that monastery" and which was in the treasury of Grottaferrata and sold in 1344,¹⁰² may have been a gift to a monastic diplomat. The monks of Grottaferrata were also used as legates in communication between Rome and the Basilian monasteries of southern Italy.¹⁰³ Moreover, according to pontifical ceremonial of the second half of the thirteenth century, during the enthronement of the pope

*duo greci de monasterio Cripteferrate . . . intersint in missa, quorum unus indutus albo et tunicella legat epistolam congruentem diei; alius sit indutus paramento et dalmatica et cantet evangelium quod congruat diei, et habeant paratos equos post missam et veniant cum processione usque ad palatium domini pape.*¹⁰⁴

Transl.: Let two Greeks of the monastery of Cryptaferata . . . attend the mass, and let one of them, clothed in white with a tunic, read the Epistle which is appropriate to the day; let the other be clothed in vestments with the dalmatic and sing the Gospel which is appropriate to the day; and let them have horses prepared after the mass and come in procession to the palace of the lord pope.

But when the pontifical court moved to Avignon, the monks of St Mary of Grottaferrata apparently lost their function as mediators between Rome and the Greeks in Southern Italy and the eastern Mediterranean. Following the general decline of Greek culture in Calabria and the Salento during the fourteenth and fifteenth centuries no learned Greek-speaking monks from southern Italy joined the monastery which was by now inhabited mostly by local monks without any knowledge of Greek and of the Byzantine tradition.¹⁰⁵

Notes

- 1 Booth 2014; von Falkenhausen 2015, 45–57.
- 2 Sansterre 1983.
- 3 Riedinger 1992, 149–64.
- 4 *Enciclopedia dei Papi*, I: 594–659; Ekonomou 2007.
- 5 Leccisotti 1973, VIII: 176–84.
- 6 Acocella 1963, 14–16; Palmieri 1981, 78–82; *Le pergamene di S. Nicola di Gallucanta*, ed. Cherubini 1990, nos. 80, 83, 94, 95, 103, at pp. 204–5, 210, 237, 239, 263; Alaggio 2002, 21–2; *Repertorio delle pergamene dell'Archivio Cavense*, ed. Carleo 2007, 31; Peters-Custot 2009, 89–91; von Falkenhausen 2014, 161–81.
- 7 *Codice diplomatico Verginiano*, ed. Tropeano 1977, I, 947–1102: no. 63, p. 246; nos. 86–86 bis, pp. 342, 346, no. 98, p. 389.
- 8 *Pergamene del monastero benedettino di S. Giorgio (1038–1698)*, ed. Casse 1950, no. 3, pp. 11–14; Galante 1974, 375–6.
- 9 *Historia et laudes ss. Sabae et Macarii iuniorum and Sicilia auctore Oreste Patriarcha Hierosolymitano*.
- 10 BHL 3671; *Vita Gregorii abbatis prior*, 1185–90; Franzese 2010, 92–124; von Falkenhausen 1998b.
- 11 *Vita Adalberti*, ed. Hoffmann 2005; *S. Adalberti Pragensis episcopi et martyris Vita altera . . .*, ed. Karwasinska 1969; von Falkenhausen 2013.
- 12 *Βίος καὶ πολιτεία τοῦ ὁσίου πατρὸς ἡμῶν Νεῖλου τοῦ Νέου*, ed. Giovanelli 1972; von Falkenhausen 1989.
- 13 *La Vita di san Bartolomeo . . .*, ed. Paroli 2008.
- 14 Sansterre 1988, 716–17.
- 15 Dykmans 1978, 616; Bordi 2008, 64.
- 16 *Βίος καὶ πολιτεία*, 127.
- 17 Ferrari 1957, 78–80; Sansterre 1990, 493–506.
- 18 *Vita et translatio s. Athanasii Neapolitani episcopi . . .*, ed. Vuolo 2001, 132, 184–5.
- 19 Luzzati Laganà 1982; von Falkenhausen 2012, 109–10, 114–16.
- 20 Rohlf 1937.
- 21 Ebner 1968–1983; Marchionibus 2004.
- 22 Ebner 1967; Visentin 2012, 150–3, 178–89.
- 23 Alaggio 2002.
- 24 *Codex diplomaticus Cavensis*, ed. Morcaldi, Schiano and De Stefano 1875, no. 382, 233.
- 25 *Le pergamene di S. Nicola di Gallucanta*, ed. Cherubini 1990.
- 26 Bloch 1986, 213–14; von Falkenhausen 1992 [but 1994], 82–3.
- 27 *Ecclesiae S. Mariae in via Lata Tabularium*, ed. Hartmann 1895, I: no. 4, p. 5.
- 28 *Βίος καὶ πολιτεία*, 112–33; von Falkenhausen 2009a, 98–100.

- 29 *Le Pergamene di S. Maria della Grotta di Vitulano* (BN), ed. Ambrosio 2013, no. 1, pp. 1–4.
- 30 *Ibid.*, no. 1, p. 1.
- 31 *Codex diplomaticus Cavensis*, II, no. 382, p. 233. It is possible that abbot Sabas was the well-known Sicilian monastic Saint Sabas the Younger: Borsari 1963, 73; Cherubini 2001, 135–7.
- 32 *Historia Abbatiae Cassinensi per saeculorum seriem distributa*, ed. Gattula 1733, I: 2934; Bloch 1986, I: 213–14.
- 33 *Codex diplomaticus Cavensis*, IV, no. 707, pp. 288–9; Alaggio 2002, 9–10.
- 34 *Βίος καὶ πολιτεία*, 132.
- 35 *Vita Adalberti*, ed. Hoffmann 1980, 141.
- 36 *Die Chronik von Montecassino*, ed. Hoffmann 1980, II: 22, 206–7.
- 37 *Codex diplomaticus Cavensis*, II, no. 309, pp. 126–7. The abbot's signature has not been read by the editors.
- 38 Huschner 2000.
- 39 von Falkenhausen 1992 [but 1994], 84–7.
- 40 *Codex diplomaticus Cavensis*, IV, no. 707, pp. 288–9.
- 41 *Historia et laudes ss. Sabae*, 50.
- 42 *Le pergamene di S. Nicola di Gallucanta*, ed. Cherubini 1990, no. 76, pp. 194–5; von Falkenhausen 2007, 583–7.
- 43 Count Guido di Pontecorvo, founder of S. Pietro della Foresta in 998, declares that *quicumque exinde hanc regulam quod dicitur atticam in latinam convertere voluerit, maledictus et excommunicatus fiat a Deo patre omnipotente* (*Historia abbatiae Cassinensis*, ed. Gattula 1733, I: 293).
- 44 *Le pergamene di S. Nicola di Gallucanta*, ed. Cherubini 1990, nos. 76–77, pp. 195, 199; see also no. 88, p. 221: *ut, amodo et dum vixero, . . . in ipsa ecclesia diurnis et nocturnis horis cotidie Dei officium peragam et peragere faciam, sicut decet presbiteris grecis*.
- 45 The sole area in Campania where a consistent Greek community with Greek notaries and judges is documented was that around Auletta and Caggiano, east of the river Tanagro: von Falkenhausen 2014, 164–6. According to Jean-Marie Martin 2016, 14, there was a Greek bishop in Olevano sul Tusciano (east of Salerno) in 1010. Martin fails to explain, however, why he thinks that *Cennamus episcopus*, mentioned in a Latin document of the prince of Salerno, was Greek. *Cennamus* is in fact a common name among the area's Lombard population.
- 46 The Greek abbot Nicodemus of St Mary of Pattano is considered to have been also a judge (κριτής). This qualification, however, is based on the misreading of his signature on a document of 1034: *Codex diplomaticus Cavensis*, VI, no. 881, p. 20; Ebner 1968–1983, 17–20. Here, instead of κριτής as read by the editors, the word μπάτης (for μάρτυς = witness) is clumsily written.
- 47 *Codex diplomaticus Cavensis*, II, no. 309, p. 127, VI, no. 881, p. 20; VIII, no. 1359, pp. 256–58, *Abbazia di Montecassino. I Regesti dell'Archivio*, ed. Leccisotti 1973, VIII, no. 9, p. 180; *Le pergamene di S. Nicola di Gallucanta*, ed. Cherubini 1990, nos. 62–63, pp. 172, 175.
- 48 *Abbazia di Montecassino. I Regesti dell'Archivio*, ed. Leccisotti 1973, VIII, nos. 1, 2, 6, 7, 8, 12, pp. 176–82 (the author did not read the Greek notes); *Le pergamene di S. Nicola di Gallucanta*, ed. Cherubini 1990, nos. 26, 41, 77, 88, 89, 94, 98, 102, 109, 111, 114, 115, 116, 118, 119, 122, 126, pp. 119, 145, 197, 219, 225, 237, 249, 260, 278, 281, 286, 288, 290, 294, 296, 302, 310.
- 49 Cupane 2007.
- 50 *Βίος καὶ πολιτεία*, 114–17.

- 51 Lucà 2015, 269–77.
- 52 Lucà 1989, 50–1.
- 53 See also in this volume, pp. 282–307.
- 54 *Vita Adalberti*, ed. Hoffmann 2005, Chapter 16, pp. 142–3; transl.: ‘as this gown and the unshorn beard attest, I am not a local man, but a Greek. The land, however, which I and my disciples cultivate, although small, belongs to those holy lords and brothers’; Sansterre 1991, 373–80.
- 55 Βίος καὶ πολιτεία, 133.
- 56 *La Vita di san Bartolomeo di Grottaferrata*, ed. Paroli 2008, 108.
- 57 *Codex diplomaticus Cavensis*, IV, no. 656, p. 295, VI, no. 881, p. 20; Ebner 1967, 135, tab. p. 107.
- 58 Βίος καὶ πολιτεία, 74.
- 59 *Ibid.*, 122.
- 60 *Ibid.*, 85.
- 61 Crimi 2013; Aletta 2009.
- 62 *Poesie di San Nilo Iuniore e di Paolo monaco*, ed. Gassisi 1906.
- 63 Lucà 1991.
- 64 De Lorenzo and Canart 2015.
- 65 *Le ‘Liber visitationis’ d’Athanas Chalkéopoulos (1457–1458)*, ed. Laurent and Guillou 1960, 159 f.
- 66 Lipinsky 1968–1983.
- 67 *Poesie di San Nilo Iuniore e di Paolo monaco*, ed. Gassisi 1906; *Gli inni sacri di s. Bartolomeo Juniore*, ed. Giovanelli 1955.
- 68 *Stefano italo-greco*, ed. Schirò 1947, p. 84: “Rome and Italy and Campania . . . with the surrounding regions” and “the Lombard peoples”.
- 69 Prinzi 2015/2016.
- 70 von Falkenhausen 1995 [but 1996].
- 71 Scordino 1969. The text is preserved in two manuscripts in the archive of the Pontificio Collegio Greco at Rome, vol. 43°, foll. 81r–82 and vol. 70°, foll. 83r–84v.
- 72 Hinterberger 1999, 183–256.
- 73 von Falkenhausen 1998a, 112.
- 74 *Documenti latini and greci del conte Ruggero I di Calabria e Sicilia*, ed. Becker 2013, no. 9, pp. 60–63.
- 75 *Pergamene del monastero benedettino di S. Giorgio*, ed. Cassese 1950, no. 9, pp. 67–70 (Salerno 1114); Ebner 1982, 26; *Nuove pergamene del monastero femminile di S. Giorgio di Salerno*, ed. Galante 1984, I: no. 36, pp. 88–90 (Salerno 1250); *Repertorio delle pergamene dell’Archivio Cavense*, ed. Carleo 2007, nos. 31, 46, 47, 62, 72, 85, 105, 108, 139, 154, 164, 166, 207, 234, 288, 316.
- 76 Ventimiglia 1827, no. III, pp. IX–XI (1083), VI, pp. XXIV–XXV (1113).
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- 78 *Rationes decimarum Italiae nei secoli XIII e XIV. Campania*, ed. M. Inguanez, Mattei-Cerasoli and Sella 1942, nos. 447, 491, 573, 612, 652, 1557, 5107, 5514, 5542, 6571, 6617.
- 79 *Regii Neapolitani Archivi Monumenta*, ed. Spinelli et al. 1861, VI, no. 593, pp. 91–96; *Monumenta ad neapolitani Ducatus historiam pertinentia*, ed. Capasso 1892, II, 1; new edn. Pilone 2008, II, 1 no. 631*, p. 457.
- 80 *Ibid.*, II, 1, no. 654, pp. 474–5; nos. 663–665, pp. 485–88; nos. 667–668, pp. 488–92; no. 674, pp. 498–9; von Falkenhausen 2012, 115–16.
- 81 Dormeier 1979, 25–80.
- 82 Bloch 1986, 212–14; *Abbazia di Montecassino. I Regesti dell’Archivio*, ed. Leccisotti 1973, VIII, 182–4.

- 83 Vitolo 1982.
- 84 *Le pergamene di S. Nicola di Gallucanta*, ed. Cherubini 1990, no. 114, pp. 286–7.
- 85 *Fonti e documenti per la storia di Vietri*, ed. Tesauro 1984, 175–7.
- 86 Ebner 1982, 133–7, 187; Guillaume 1877, XXI; von Falkenhausen 2014, 178–9.
- 87 Ebner 1968–1983, 193.
- 88 Marchionibus 2004, 48.
- 89 *Le ‘Liber visitationis’ d’Athanase Chalkeopoulos*, ed. Laurent and Guillou 1960, 158–60.
- 90 *Ibid.*, 160: *dixit: “Stamu incappati in manu di questi Grechi, chi su venuti da lo levante et non sapimu si su christiani oy turchi.”* Bianca 2017, 64–68.
- 91 *Le ‘Liber visitationis’ d’Athanase Chalkeopoulos*, ed. Laurent and Guillou 1960 161–7.
- 92 *S. Leonis IX. Epistola ad Michaellem . . .*, ed. Will 1861, 81: “within and outside Rome one can find many Greek monasteries and churches.”
- 93 Sansterre 1988, 716–17, n. 41.
- 94 von Falkenhausen 2015, 67.
- 95 Caciorgna 2005, 10–11, n. 49, 380, n. 5; Breccia 2009, 169–85.
- 96 Follieri 1988/1997; Breccia 1992.
- 97 Caciorgna 2005, 11–13.
- 98 Parenti 2005, 412–29; Bucca 2009.
- 99 Foti 1985; Lucà 1989; Parenti 2005, 111, 113, 295–6, 300, 361, 419–20.
- 100 Parenti 2005, 104–8, 293–6, 418–21 *et passim*; Prinzi 2013.
- 101 Gaufredus Malaterra, *De rebus gestis Rogerii Calabriae et Siciliae comitis et Roberti Guiscardi fratris eius*, ed. Pontieri 1927, IV, 13, 92; Stiernon 1965, 1, n. 3.
- 102 *Acta Clementis pp. VI (1342–1352) e registris Vaticanis aliisque fontibus*, ed. Tăutu, IX, no. 53, pp. 87–8: *Quadam cuppa de auro, quam imperator Constantinopolitanus olim dedisse dicto monasterio dicitur.*
- 103 von Falkenhausen 2014, 311, 314.
- 104 Dykmans 1981, 326–7; Sansterre 1988, 717–18.
- 105 Falcone 2005, 249, 251; Lucà 2012, 31–2.

Bibliography

Abbreviations

BHG: Bibliotheca hagiographica graeca.
 BHL: Bibliotheca hagiographica latina.
 MGH: Monumenta Germaniae Historica.
 MPH: Monumenta Poloniae Historica.

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4 Art and architecture for Byzantine monks in Calabria

Sources, monuments,
paintings and objects (ninth
to thirteenth centuries)

Lorenzo Riccardi

Broadly speaking, dealing with Byzantine art in Calabria is equivalent to retracing the fortunes of its monasticism. Thus, an overlap is assumed between works of art and the monks who both desired these objects and materially produced them. Such an assumption leads to a strong ‘pan-monastic’ theory, according to which the production methods and the transmission of art (but also by extension of literature and, generally, of culture) were the sole prerogative of monks. Consequently, any other contribution is dropped from the picture, monks alone being held to have had the leading role in cultural and artistic life during the Byzantine and Norman domination in this territory. In fact, for a long time, scholars have postulated that Byzantine art in Calabria depended on the arrival of several waves of iconodule monks who were fleeing iconoclast persecutions in the East,¹ so that, as Father Vaccari wrote, “the Basilian monasteries in Calabria gave even more than they had received, not only to the West, but mainly to the East”.²

This ‘pan-monastic’ theory permeates the studies of medieval art and architecture not only of Calabria but of the entire Byzantine Southern Italy, not only due to the automatic identification between caves or crypts with monastic settlements, but also because of the ‘invention’ of a presumed ‘monastic’ art, which, as Viktor Lazarev memorably stated, is of “little interest [because] . . . it had no future. Lost in the caves of hermits, it fed on the deeply peripheral traditions of an eastern-Christian world immune from Constantinopolitan influence”.³ However, detailed research has readily proven that “between the monastic institution and the so-called monastic style no connection can be pointed out”.⁴ This observation is applicable both to the Byzantine *oikoumene* and to Southern Italy.⁵ This revisionary position has also taken into greater account, from a historical point of view, the phenomenon of Hellenization in Southern Italy, wrongly considered until now the exclusive prerogative of Byzantine monks.⁶

A widespread phenomenon

The importance of Greek monasticism in Calabria should nonetheless not be underestimated from the point of view of its cultural and also political, administrative and religious role. Although concentrated in specific regions, where we can find an extraordinary density of settlements tightly interlocking with each other (from the hermits' caves to smaller monasteries, some of which *metochia* of larger monasteries), this phenomenon is deeply ingrained in all of Calabria (Figure 4.1) [numbers in square brackets in the text below refer to points on this map]. We know this from reading hagiographical and documentary sources that contain a long series of names, both of places and persons. Our challenge is actually to intersect such information with other evidence starting from the archaeological and artistic finds. In fact, most of the Greek monasteries mentioned in the sources date to the ninth–tenth century and can be hardly identified on the field, since they no longer survive.⁷

Byzantine documents, such as the *brebion* of Reggio (1050 *circa*), mention several monastic foundations that often appear to be of modest or small proportions and under familiar conduct.⁸ Furthermore, there are foundations of holy monks too, as we know following the peregrinations of Elias called the Speleot, Arsenius, Elias of Enna and his disciple Daniel, Vitalis of Castronuovo, Sabbas and Neilos between the ninth and the tenth century along the whole Calabrian territory. As we read in the *Vitae*, these monasteries are small and often lack the bare essentials for subsistence. Typically, the holy founder chooses one among his properties, or an abandoned church or chapel, or any remote place where he can live in isolation or with a few brothers. Such 'accommodation' is frequently precarious and doomed to last over but a few generations of disciples.⁹ In other cases, the *ktetores* (founders) can be lay people too, in particular local notables. Their intervention may be limited to donations, especially of lands, but their aim is always to guarantee salvation for their souls through the liturgical celebrations and prayers of the monks. Among the obligations contracted by the hegumen when he is elected by the *ktetor*, there is the construction of a church where the monks can raise these prayers and serve the sacred office.¹⁰ For example, in 1015 the Turmarch Ursolus and some members of his family donated to the hegumen Luke a castle and a monastery dedicated to St Ananias, which once belonged to a "certain Zachariah", at Oriolo. It has been recently proposed that a fortified monastery discovered [1] at Presinace (Nocara) and including a ruined church with painted walls could be identified as the settlement of Ursolus.¹¹ This case widens the social horizon of the phenomenon beyond saints' *Vitae*, in this confirming the existence of other founders.

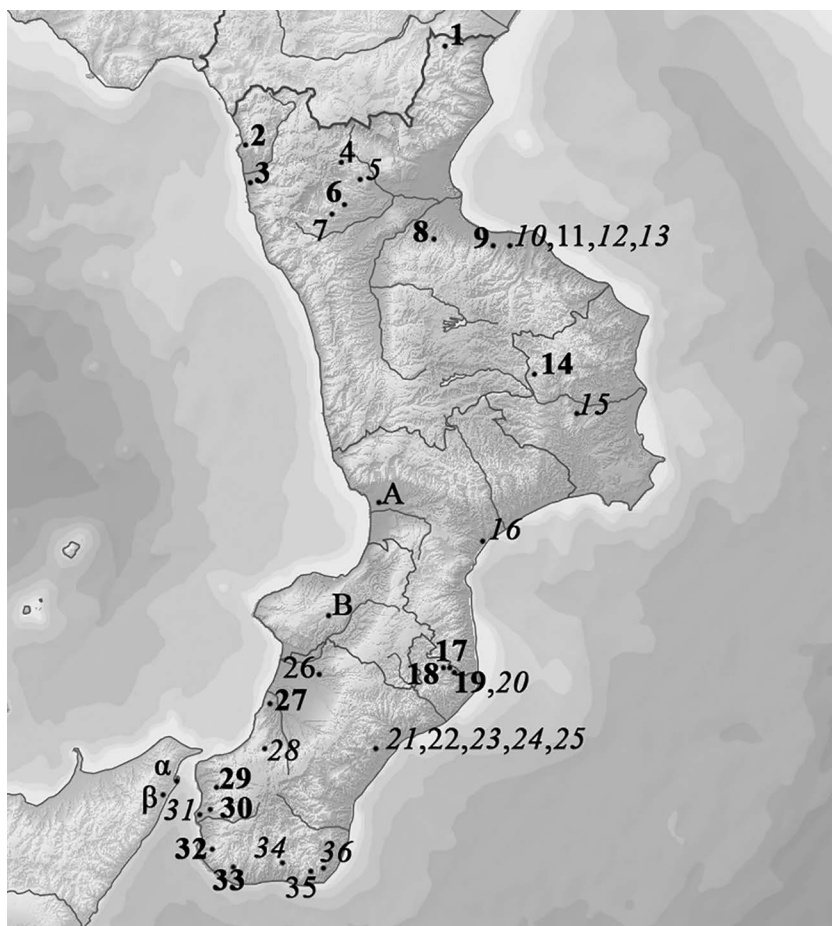


Figure 4.1 A map of the places mentioned in the paper. In bold are indicated monastic places with painted and/or carved decoration; in regular type monastic places without decoration; in italics non-monastic places

1. Presinace (Nocara), monastic fortified settlement; 2. Scalea, church called 'dello Spedale'; 3. Santa Maria del Cedro, St Andrew; 4. Morano, monastic fortified settlement; 5. Castrovillari, stucco panels from unknown location; 6. San Donato di Ninea, St Donatus 'al Pantano'; 7. Casalini San Sosti, monastic fortified settlement; 8. San Demetrio Corone, St Hadrian; 9. Rossano (vicinity of), St Mary of Patir; 10. Rossano, Cathedral; 11. Rossano, St Anastasia (no longer extant); 12. Rossano, St Mark; 13. Rossano, Panagia; 14. Caccuri, Timpa de Santi; 15. Santa Severina; 16. Borgia, Roccelletta; 17. Bivongi, St John 'Vecchio' or 'Terista'; 18. Pazzano (vicinity of), cave of St Mary on Mount Stella; 19. Stilo (vicinity of), cave called 'dell'Angelo'; 20. Stilo, Cattolica; 21. Gerace, Cathedral; 22. Gerace, St Archangels Michael and Gabriel; 23. Gerace, St Giovannello; 24. Gerace, St Mary del Mastro; 25. Gerace, church of Annunziatella – St Theodore; 26. Melicuccà, cave of St Elias called 'the Speleot'; 27. Taureana, St Phantinos; 28. San Luca d'Aspromonte, St George of Pietra Cappa; 29. Calamizzi, St Nicholas; 30. Reggio (vicinity of), St Mary de Terreti; 31. Reggio Calabria, church called 'degli Ottimati'; 32. Santo Niceto (Motta San Giovanni), St Anthony; 33. Fossato Jonico, St Anastasios; 34. Amendolea (Condofuri), St Nicholas; 35. Staiti, St Mary de Tridetti; 36. Bruzzano Vecchio, St Mary of the Annunciation.

A. Lamezia Terme (vicinity of), St Euphemia; B. Mileto, Holy Trinity.

α. Messina (Sicily), St Savior; β. Mili San Pietro (Sicily), St Mary of Mili.

Drawing: Lorenzo Riccardi.

Not only monks

Nonetheless, a few surviving traces suggest that the artistic and architectural production in Calabria during the Byzantine era (and to a greater degree, during the Norman epoch) is not confined to monastic places. Furthermore, one may not characterize these simply as “popular and monastic”, as Biagio Cappelli categorically states when talking of an important and ancient painted ‘icon,’ the *Acheiropita* of Rossano Cathedral [10].¹² His designation of Southern Italian art as “popular and monastic” entails some mistaken assumptions, namely, that the forms and contents of this art are solely related to the monastic experience, itself of a limited kind and quality, and that moreover such trends are strong enough to mould a more or less homogeneous set of contemporary works.

The reality is actually very different. In Calabria too, there were clearly both secular and high-ranking ecclesiastical patrons, as revealed in *kastra*, urban residences, cathedrals and infrastructural buildings. We have unfortunately few extant traces of the latter, as in the case of Santa Severina [15], one of the most important political centres and a metropolitan see. An inscription mentions an imperial *spatharokandidatos*, Stavrakios, who financed (as συνδρομητής, that is co-sponsor, donor) the ‘construction’ of a church (ἐκκλησία τοῦ Θεοῦ καθολικὴ καὶ ἀποστολική), which is now possible to identify with the Cathedral built during the episcopate of Ambrose in 1035–36.¹³ Furthermore, some amazing painted fragments were found below the floor of a room of the medieval castle. They belong to a Byzantine chapel inside the coeval fortified settlement, which was then conquered by the Normans.¹⁴ Among them we can single out a small human face, maybe part of a torture scene. The high stylistic quality suggests a noble lay patronage and some skilled artists, who likely came from an important center, if not from the capital of the empire, as Marina Falla Castelfranchi writes.¹⁵

In the Byzantine and Norman eras, then, medieval art in Calabria is not just ‘monastic.’ Although the extant evidence is small, proof of this is found in various types of object. Within the limits of this paper, I will survey monuments and works for Greek monks, while remaining well aware that our selection narrowly fits our brief, whereas the wider artistic context should remain a further point of reference.

Architecture and wall-paintings in the Byzantine era (9th to mid-11th century)

The monasteries founded in this period, as we have said, are small family-based clusters. The analysis of the scant artistic and architectural survivals bears out this humbler cultural and economic picture.

Let us take the case of St Neilos. Nowadays any sign of his ‘building activity’ is lost, but from his *Vita* we know that he built or reconstructed

several structures in northern Calabria.¹⁶ This source, however, gives no information about their plan or decoration.¹⁷ About the female monastery of St Anastasia [11] at Rossano, founded by the imperial judge Eupraxios in the second half of the tenth century, the *Vita* generically states that Neilos rebuilt it because he found it in bad condition.¹⁸ The monastery of St Hadrian at San Demetrio Corone [8] that Neilos originally erected as a hermitage next to an existing small oratory (μικρὸν εὐκτήριον) on his family's property¹⁹ is intentionally built of small dimensions and with very poor materials (including mud).²⁰ In this case, Neilos refused the support of the *strategos* Basil invoking the reason that a richer construction could attract the Saracens.²¹

The saint monks and their brothers constructed these buildings on their own, according to a *topos* that is frequent in the *Vitae* and that can be understood when we consider what the “pillars of their economic thought” were, namely, askesis and self-sufficiency.²² Besides, the monks's favorite places were always caves. There they found a setting for indispensable and essential “spiritual education”. Ascetes come across these caves in the wilderness, as they are seeking solace and shelter from the confusion of the city and of the monastery itself.²³ However, except in rare cases, the caves mentioned in the hagiographical sources bear no specific mark that could confirm the presence of monastic life beyond doubt. Their very strict spiritual necessities constrained the monks to a preference for modest accommodation, guarding the perfect anonymity of their dwelling places.²⁴ St Elias the Speleot (864–960) is, despite his name, an exception to this rule. When he was hosted by Cosmas and Vitalios in a cave [26] in the Salinae (salt-marsh) territory near Melicuccà, he enlarged it by expanding into the adjacent cave, and built a church dedicated either to the Apostles or to Sts Peter and Paul. In the largest cave there is an altar and other furnishings while, below it, a very important burial site was discovered, that Elias maybe dug for himself, as his *Vita* mentions.²⁵ Other monastic rock-settlements are not so easy to identify and seem to be rare, as the Timpa dei Santi at Caccuri [14], displaying shabby non-datable frescoes, in which a figure of a *Pantokrator* can be at least identified.²⁶

Nowadays, two caves that are not documented in the sources still preserve a painted decoration that makes clear their monastic function. They are quite close to each other. The first is called Grotta dell'Angelo (‘Angel's cave’) [19] and is situated on the Consolino mountainside near Stilo. The second, St Mary [18], is on Mount Stella near Pazzano. The first cave is within the rock on three sides.²⁷ Above the entrance there is a small dome with a poor-quality fresco, perhaps representing the *Ascension*,²⁸ but the most interesting painting is in the ogival niche on the southern side where two saints embrace and Christ blesses them from above (Figure 4.2). This iconography can be recognized as the *Meeting of St Peter and St Paul*,²⁹ as the still legible inscription indeed confirms: ὁ ἀπασ/μός τῶν ἁγίων.³⁰



Figure 4.2 Stilo (vicinity of), cave called 'dell'Angelo,' *Meeting of St Peter and St Paul* (11th c.). Photo published in 1935

Photo: from Cappelli, Biagio. 1935. 'L'arte medievale in Calabria.' *Archivio Storico per la Calabria e la Lucania* 5: 275–87.

In front of this image there used to be two medallions, now stolen, each bearing a half-length portrait. In the first, the readable letters were O A[. . .]OC BAC[. . .]OC,³¹ which identified its subject with St Basil,³² while in the other one only the word AΓΙOC (saint) was visible.³³ All of the cave was actually painted, maybe at the end of the tenth or in the first half of the eleventh century. The choice of representing the *Meeting* is quite unusual in a rock context, in particular when this subject appears in

isolation, like an iconic representation. However, Italo-Greek monks had a great veneration for Sts Peter and Paul and often journeyed to Rome to visit their burials, as for example the *Vita* of St Elias the Speleot testifies.³⁴

The sanctuary of St Mary on Mount Stella (Santa Maria sul Monte Stella) is nowadays configured into a shape that does not seem to be the original one, because the level of the floor has sunk down and the inner walls that divided the interior space into a series of smaller rooms have collapsed.³⁵ Inside, there are several frescoes dated from the tenth to the fifteenth century.³⁶ The most ancient is on the upper mouth of the cave, now farther from floor level than when it was painted. It is a single item with the *Communion of St Mary of Egypt* (Figure 4.3). As Marina Falla Castelfranchi writes, this subject spells out the “hermitical vocation of this cave, almost a sublimation of its function.”³⁷ Thus, it is possible that female hermits maybe here for a certain time and appreciated the painting as an ‘identity image’ conveying the possibility of redemption through prayers and confession. The quality of these rock frescoes is not so excellent, especially if we compare them with the aforementioned fragments from Santa Severina [15].

However, it should be borne in mind that the word ‘cave’ is not synonymous with ‘monastery.’ In the second half of the last century, after important studies on the well-known rock settlements of Apulia and Basilicata, scholars have also subsumed many Calabrian caves within the broader scope of a rock-dwelling culture (‘*civiltà rupestre*’).³⁸ Furthermore, it is necessary to remember that in some cases these caves could originally have served as places of worship, even earlier than the second Byzantine domination, during the Longobard era (seventh to mid-ninth century).³⁹

There are not many extant monastic ground-level buildings from the Byzantine period, in view of the difficulties in dating them with any certainty. In Calabria, in fact, the typology of single-aisled churches, usually of modest size and with pointed-roof cover, had great fortune from the early Middle Ages down to the last centuries. They often lack a narthex and present a projecting apse in the centre and at times two wall niches at the opposite ends of the East wall, used respectively as *prothesis* and *diakonikon*. Some churches can be equipped with three identical apses, while the entrance is chiefly located on the lateral walls.⁴⁰ These churches are very difficult to date, in the absence of clearly dated prototypes. Moreover, variations in structure and iconography according to different functions are also hard to pinpoint. Because of this, we can only deduce from the analysis (or from the combination of analyses) of possible secondary existing structures whether they belonged to monastic settlements, or we may bring to bear on these issues documentary and hagiographical sources, or any preserved painted decoration as well. However, art-historian Annabel Jane Wharton warns of the dangers in this type of extrapolation.⁴¹



Figure 4.3 Pazzano (vicinity of), cave of St Mary on Mount Stella, *Communion of St Mary of Egypt* (10th-11th c.)

Photo: Lorenzo Riccardi.

The few churches that we could relate to the Byzantine era seem to lack any kind of clear monastic element. For instance, it was suggested that the church called ‘dello Spedale’ at Scalea [2] was – as we will see – a monastery, because its frescoes, datable to the second half of the eleventh century, depict two monks.⁴² If according to a later source the building was an urban monastery in the twelfth century, which does not necessarily imply that it was so in the previous centuries too, since the more ancient paintings – the *Vision of St Eustachios* (end of the tenth century)⁴³ – does not help us to clarify its original function. An analogous case is that of St Donatus ‘al Pantano’ (in the marsh) at San Donato di Ninea [6], that, although it was almost surely a monastery from the end of the twelfth century, it yet contains a late eleventh-century painted decoration showing standing bishops (Figure 4.16a).⁴⁴

Moving from archaeological evidence to written sources, the situation is no less complicated. St Andrew at Santa Maria del Cedro [3], a single-aisled church with three projecting semi-circular apses,⁴⁵ can be used as a basis for discussion. It could be identified with the monastery mentioned in a document of 1042 and donated in 1053 to the Latin monastery of the Holy Trinity (Santa Trinità) at Cava de’ Tirreni.⁴⁶ We do not know whether the nowadays ruined walls of this building were built before or after 1053, despite the fact that the no-longer extant fresco in the northern apse⁴⁷ – a beautiful, perhaps standing, Archangel – seemed to date back to the beginning of the twelfth century.⁴⁸

A clear preference for the single-aisled plan is testified by recent archaeological excavations in northern Calabria too. Inside some fortified places there are buildings of small dimensions, where the neighboring people could take refuge in case of peril. We have already mentioned the settlement of Presinace [1] by the Turmarch Ursolus,⁴⁹ but other contexts with the same features have now become known (e.g., the anonymous churches in Sassone at Morano Calabro [4] or near Casalini di San Sosti [7], close to the Sanctuary of the Madonna del Pettoruto).⁵⁰

Concerning the two most famous Byzantine churches in Calabria, the Cattolica [20] of Stilo (Figure 4.4a) and St Mark [12] at Rossano (Figure 4.4b), both belonging to the typology of the cross-in-square plan with five domes; while it has been proposed to attribute a monastic function to them, this hypothesis is not borne out by the historical sources, material remains or by internal decoration.

The same can be said for another two buildings of similar cross-in-square plan, which are only known through drawings or hypotheses of reconstruction: the lower church of St Gregory, called ‘degli Ottimati’ or SS.ma Annunziata [31] at Reggio Calabria and St George of Pietra Cappa [28] at San Luca d’Aspromonte. On the contrary, during the middle Byzantine period this type of plan is widely adopted in monastic churches in the East.⁵¹ It has been postulated by several scholars that the Cattolica was originally the *katholikon* of a cenobium or of some hermitic caves

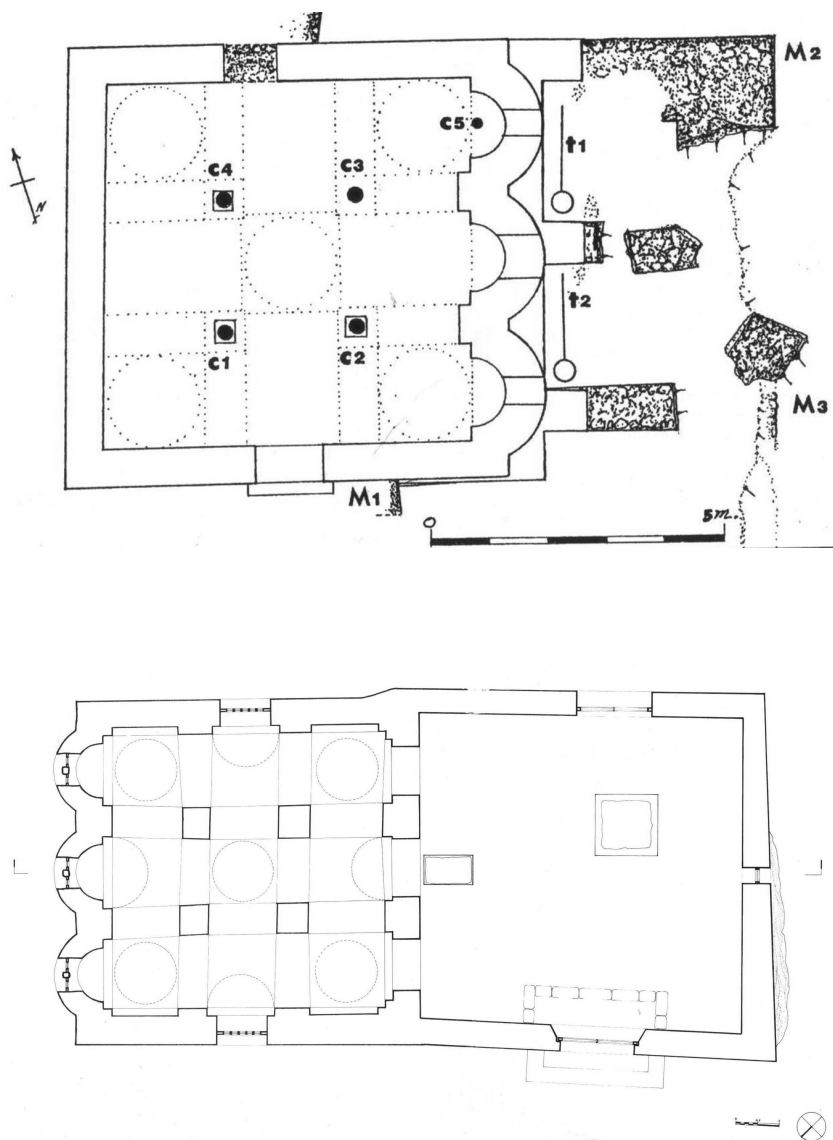


Figure 4.4 (a-b) Plan scheme of the cross-in-square churches (11th c.): a. Catolica of Stilo (Drawing: from Cuteri, Francesco A. 1997. 'La *Catholica antiqua* e il *Kastron* di Stilo: note archeologiche e topografiche.' *Vivarium Scyllacense* 8: 59-90); b. St Mark at Rossano (Drawing: from Altomare, Luigi and Adele Coscarella. 1991. *Rossano e il suo territorio. Un progetto di musealizzazione all'aperto*. Cosenza: Editoriale Bios)

at Stilo.⁵² However, no traces of other monastic structures emerged in its immediate vicinity during the archaeological excavations,⁵³ even if we cannot exclude the possibility that the church played different roles in the meantime.⁵⁴ In fact, the Cattolica [20] was within the jurisdiction of the Matrice church of Stilo from the fourteenth century.⁵⁵ According to a widely popular hypothesis, St Mark [12] at Rossano should be identified with the female monastery of St Anastasia [11], founded, as we have mentioned above, by the imperial judge Eupraxios and reconstructed by St Neilos after the earthquake of *circa* 970.⁵⁶ St Neilos was credited with introducing the cross-in-square plan in Calabria, since he had used it for the church at San Demetrio Corone [8] too.⁵⁷ However, these hypotheses are disavowed by the sources themselves,⁵⁸ as well as by the chronology of these monuments. About the other two aforementioned buildings, now lost, some scholars have attributed a monastic function in particular to St George [28] by identifying it with the monastery of St George 'de Bubalino' (Bovalino) or 'de Carra', mentioned for the first time in 1197,⁵⁹ even if the question of its dating is unresolved, since it is hovering between the seventh and the eleventh century.⁶⁰ The Ottimati church [31], that stood in the political centre of Reggio Calabria and that served as palatine chapel in the Norman era, is unlikely to have been an urban monastery in its Byzantine phase.⁶¹ Outside this region, in Apulia, the two well-known cross-in-square churches, St Peter at Otranto and the ancient Cathedral of Castro (near Otranto), were never monasteries.⁶²

On the other hand, it is not certain whether the churches of Stilo [20] and Rossano [12] really date back to the Byzantine era at all. The cross-in-square plan with five domes, a rarer variant of the standard single-domed church, seems to be recorded only from the end of the tenth century – with the exception of well-known yet debated examples from Constantinople –, increasing in use in the twelfth.⁶³ Some structural and decorative features could confirm a date not earlier than the beginning of the eleventh century. For instance, we can consider as dating elements the material used in the wall construction, consisting of bricks (Figure 4.5) that are unusual before their widespread use in the 'Norman' churches like St Mary de Tridetti [35], St John 'Vecchio' or 'Terista' [17] and St Mary of the Roccelletta [16] (all twelfth-century churches). It was remarked that in Stilo [20] ancient bricks were used in conjunction with the new ones,⁶⁴ the latter similar to those employed in St John 'Vecchio' [17] (Figure 4.6), St Mary de Tridetti [30] and St Mary of Mili (Sicily) [8]. A type of brick that Cuteri calls 'Norman' testifies to the "meaningful revival of brickwork from the end of the eleventh century."⁶⁵ However, as Cuteri himself states, the use of bricks could not be a consequence of the new domination, since the Normans did not use them in their own buildings. Their introduction is conceivably due to Calabrian or Sicilian workers, who made the bricks *in loco* and reused available material, as the older bricks themselves or as segments from columns.⁶⁶ I reckon that



Figure 4.5 Stilo, Cattolica, the exterior southern wall (late 11th c.)

Photo: Lorenzo Riccardi.

the other two churches, St George [28] and the Ottimati [31], date back to the Norman era too. They share features like the *opus sectile* floor and the reuse of ancient columns, capitals and bases: such phenomenon took place in Stilo also, however according to more utilitarian principles. These features are quite unusual in the artistic context of Byzantine Calabria and seem to suggest an important and rich patronage, especially for the *opus sectile*, that requires specific workers and that seems to characterize many Calabrian monuments built in Norman times.⁶⁷

So, in looking at such evidence, exceptions are rare, like some edifices built as places of worship for a saint and afterwards turned into monasteries. To take an example, the crypt of St Phantinos in Taureana [27] was a Roman building, perhaps a cistern, in which according to a local tradition the homonymous saint was buried. It became a female (and then a male) monastery from the eighth century where important holy monks, like Nikodemos in the tenth century, paid their visit.⁶⁸

The quite modest aspect of Greek monasticism during the Byzantine era in Calabria seems to concern book production too. The *Vitae* of St Elias the Speleot and St Neilos (tenth century) emphasize their experience as amanuenses.⁶⁹ St Neilos usually spent several hours of the day



Figure 4.6 Bivongi, St John ‘Vecchio’ or ‘Terista,’ the exterior sanctuary walls (early 12th c.)

Photo: Lorenzo Riccardi.

copying manuscripts, even if he was in an uncomfortable place like a cave. His minute handwriting is testified in a large number of books⁷⁰ and became a ‘school’ mark thanks to his example and lesson.⁷¹ The manuscripts related to Neilos himself or to other monasteries in Calabria (or

outside the area, as in Grottaferrata, where he moved to) share the same features: they are portable, clearly written, with a minimal, plain illumination. The latter consists of initials, headpieces and borders that are not just decoration, but that also appear functional to structuring the contents of the written text.⁷² *Patmiacus* gr. 33 (now kept in the Monastery of St John on Patmos, but copied in Reggio Calabria in 940 by the monks Nicholas and his spiritual son Daniel) is the only book from this region that contains full-page illuminations: a series of epigrams inside frames of different shapes decorated with geometrical, zoomorphic and floral patterns that are an *unicum* among Byzantine illumination in Calabria at that time.⁷³ There are no narrative images; full-length portraits are rare too and always used for the initials.

Architecture and sculpture in the Norman era

The change in domination paradoxically constitutes a step forward for Greek monasticism in Calabria, not only from the point of view of economic and political advancement, but also from that of a cultural and artistic perspective. If at the beginning of their reign the Normans seem to be less than enthusiastic, if not plain hostile, towards the Byzantine settlements (from the '60s of the eleventh century), this attitude changes after the conquest of Sicily by Roger I (1091) and then from the time of Adelasia's regency (1101–12). Many donations made in favor of Greek monasteries by Adelasia and Roger themselves and by notables of their court are recorded in the sources. Thanks to them, it became possible to build and decorate new churches.⁷⁴ As a starting point for our discussion, we can take two cases that are closely related to each other through the figures of the hegumen Bartholomew and of his disciples: St Mary of Patir [9] at Rossano and St Savior *in lingua phari* [α] at Messina. Bartholomew, in fact, founded a monastery at the end of the eleventh century near Rossano, immediately gaining great favor and gratitude from the local people. He even equipped it with a *scriptorium* which contained manuscripts – which were brought back by the hegoumen himself from Constantinople too between 1106 and 1107, as the *Vita* of the saint recounts. In Byzantium, Bartholomew was benevolently welcomed with honor and gifts by the emperor Alexios I.⁷⁵ In this period, the Patir monastery had received the first donations from the Emir Christodoulos (1111), who cooperated with Adelasia during her regency and, just after that, from Roger himself (1114, 1122).⁷⁶ Once ascended to the throne (1130), Roger entrusted the foundation of a new royal monastery in Messina to Bartholomew (1130), dedicated to the Savior (San Salvatore). This foundation was to be the motherhouse to all other Greek monasteries in Sicily as well as to the near-most ones in Calabria. Since Bartholomew died in August 1130, the first hegumen (at least, from February 1133) was to be his disciple Luke (d. 1149).⁷⁷

Rossano and Messina are not isolated cases. The Normans supported many other foundations according to a deliberate policy geared to control the territory, thanks also to the effective collaboration or at least the passive acceptance of the Greek monks themselves, who exerted a strong ascendancy over the local people. Thus, by building churches and monasteries, they gained local support. Furthermore, it is necessary to remember that after the consolidation of the Norman reign, everyday life was safer and more stable, since the Saracen raids ceased. In this way, more funds became available that could be used to construct and decorate sacred buildings.

Some hegumenoi, with whom Roger and his mother personally engaged, were promoters of significant artistic projects. For the monastery at Rossano, Bartholomew collected manuscripts, church furnishings (later divided with the new foundation at Messina after 1133) and acquired the most celebrated icon that was to give name and fame to the Patir, that of the Νέα Ὁδηγήτρια. The icon, now lost, perhaps came from Constantinople as a gift from Emperor Alexios I.⁷⁸ One can also remember Bishop Leontios, formerly hegumen of the Greek monastery of the Sts Archangels Michael and Gabriel [22], who acted as patron of a (now lost) mosaic in the Cathedral of Gerace, his see [21], in which Christ was represented between Roger II and Leontios himself. Mentioning this work in the sixteenth century, the then bishop Ottaviano Pasqua offers an interesting detail about the figure of his predecessor: according to him, Leontios wore a 'pluvial', that would have been quite an unusual dress for the period of the mosaic, around 1140. Was it not rather the monastic garment from which the later pluvial derives, which caused confusion in the later bishop, who was much more familiar with the latter by his time?⁷⁹

However, scholarly opinion is not unanimous concerning the role of the Normans in the field of culture, both in general and with respect to Greek in particular. On the basis of extensive research on the manuscripts, both Canart and Cavallo emphasize its increase and its quantitative and qualitative renewal,⁸⁰ whereas Lucà regards the Norman contribution as modest and believes that it was limited to "some material and organizational incentives" for the "few monastic centres where this culture was kept".⁸¹ Nevertheless, although we may not be able to define it as a veritable cultural programme or as a full-scale 'revival', the Norman era is distinguished from the point of view of art and architecture by the production of works and monuments that are very elaborate and that were certainly unknown in Southern Italy before their advent.

Several buildings, in fact, implied novelties such as plans, structural solutions, or sculptural decoration that cannot be explained on the basis of the local Byzantine background, notwithstanding its hypothetical enrichment through direct contacts with the Byzantine center, which is anyway hard to prove conclusively. This observation does not necessarily

entail that any radical revolution or systematic and mechanical application of such innovative elements has occurred, especially if we remember that in this period the single-aisled churches continue to be constructed together with a set of other 'timeless' features, as mentioned above. Meanwhile, in particular in the cases where we can prove the 'physical' or, most often, only 'economic' presence of the Normans, we must take stock of a more elevated production that is qualitatively different when compared to the previous situation. This change is testified by some case studies concerning the period from the end of the eleventh to the middle of the twelfth century, a time also distinguished by important architectural projects of the first conquerors, Robert Guiscard and Roger the Great Count, like the royal monasteries of Holy Trinity at Mileto [B] and St Euphemia near Lamezia Terme [A], that were assigned to the Benedictines of Saint Evroul-sur-Ouche, under the guidance of their abbot-architect Robert de Grandmesnil.⁸²

The first key monument is St John 'Vecchio' or 'Terista' [17] at Bivongi, near Stilo (Figures 4.6, 4.7a). The monastery was probably reconstructed at the end of the eleventh century on a previous one that had been built when the saint was still alive (around the middle of the same century).⁸³ In 1100, in fact, Roger the Great Count made a donation to it,⁸⁴ and in 1105 his widow Adelasia stopped here with her son.⁸⁵ It had been consecrated in 1122⁸⁶ and in 1144, on Roger II's order, it became "francum et liberum et regium".⁸⁷ This sequence of events rests on the hypothesis of several building phases, all included by the middle of the twelfth century.⁸⁸ The church consists of a single nave, preceded by a quadrangular room (with a later funerary function) and extended eastwards into a tripartite sanctuary, that shows great similarity with the transalpine choirs used in the aforementioned Benedictine abbeys, but unknown in Calabria until the Normans' domination.⁸⁹ Also unusual in Byzantine tradition is the marked verticality of the central domed bay of the sanctuary, obtained thanks to a particular type of squinch: "a tall cylindrical niche topped by a diminutive quarter dome is outlined by a series of stilted arches, whose bases form small triangles that project from the planes of the walls".⁹⁰ This feature probably relies on Islamic construction techniques.⁹¹ On the other hand, more usual Byzantine traits are the polychromatic effect of the exterior walls of the *bema* (courses of brick alternated, more or less regularly, with courses of white or dark rubble) and the decorative brickwork, like the interlaced arches on the apse-wall and the friezes, the semi-arches and the recessed arches on the other surfaces. The provenance of the skilled workers of St John is not known for certain: perhaps they were from Eastern Sicily,⁹² but in any case their building reveals an astonishing artistic plurality that stretches beyond the local background.

The monastery of St Mary de Tridetti [35] at Staiti in the province of Reggio Calabria seems to have a building history analogous to that of St John 'Vecchio' [17], although we do not have any historical sources

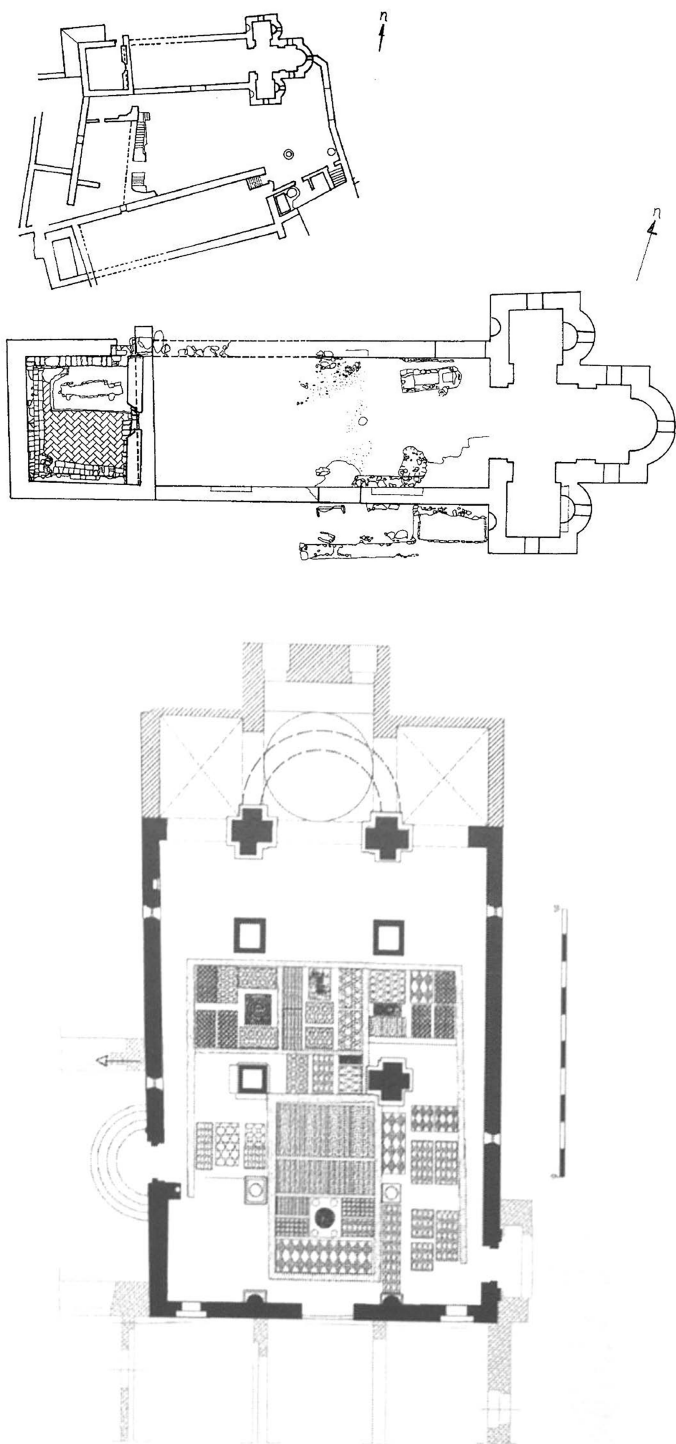


Figure 4.7 (a-c) (Continued)

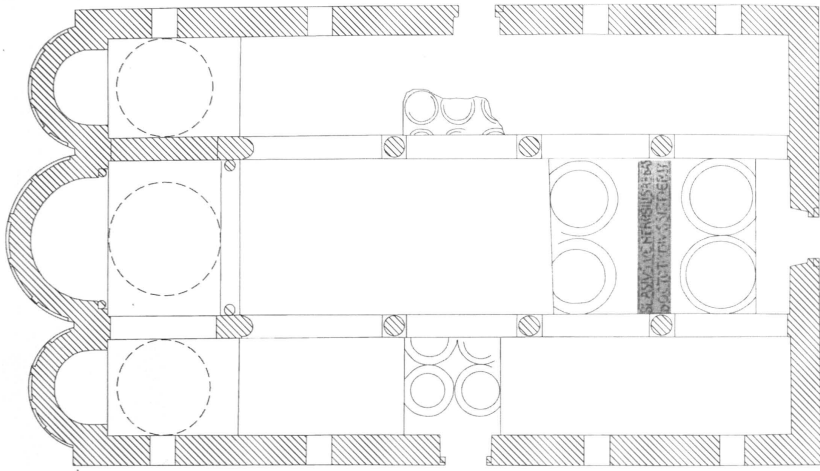


Figure 4.7 (a-c) Plan scheme of the 'Greek-Norman' monasteries (12th c.): a. St John 'Vecchio' or 'Terista' at Bivongi (Drawing: from Cuteri, Francesco A. and Maria Teresa Iannelli. 2000. 'Da Stilada a Stilo: prime annotazioni su forme e sequenze insediative in un'area campione calabrese.' In: *II Congresso nazionale di Archeologia Medievale (Brescia, 28 settembre – 1 ottobre 2000)*, ed. by Gian Pietro Brogiolo, 209–22. Borgo San Lorenzo: All'Insegna del Giglio.); b. St Hadrian at San Demetrio Corone (Drawing: from Coscarella, Adele. 2012. 'La chiesa di Sant'Adriano a San Demetrio Corone (CS): nuove indagini.' In: *VI Congresso nazionale di Archeologia Medievale (L'Aquila, 12–15 settembre 2012)*, ed. by Fabio Redi and Alfonso Forgione, 154–59. Borgo San Lorenzo: All'Insegna del Giglio); c. St Mary of Patir near Rossano (Drawing: from Coscarella, Adele. 2001. 'S. Maria del Patir dalla lettura stratigrafica alla comprensione di un monumento già noto.' *Daidalos* 1: 66–72)

related to it before the end of thirteenth century.⁹³ It is an *ex novo* construction on the site of a more ancient one, even if it shows the union of different features individualizing the Norman period. It consists of three naves and three apses; three pointed arches allow the entrance from the *naos* to the sanctuary. The central bay is covered with a hemispherical dome (now collapsed) consisting of two drums, of which the upper one alternates cylindrical squinches with windows. The exterior walls, as in St John, are marked by a polychromatic effect.⁹⁴

St Mary de Terreti [30] near Reggio, sadly destroyed at the beginning of the twentieth century, had been built on a previous monastery mentioned in the *brebion* (1050 circa) in which the name of its ancient patron, Blasius Metaxotos, is recorded too.⁹⁵ The church is known both literally from modern sources and archaeologically from the ruined basement.⁹⁶

It consists of three naves and three apses, with a central domed bay. It was proposed that it had been completed before 1050,⁹⁷ but it seems more likely that it was built some years later, maybe in the twelfth century, since the *opus sectile* (very similar to that of ‘degli Ottimati’ [31])⁹⁸ and the stucco panels,⁹⁹ once in the church, support a later dating.

St Hadrian [8] at San Demetrio Corone (Figure 4.7b) can be taken as another case study, despite its building phases being not so clearly identifiable. The present church rises on the place where in 955 St Neilos installed a community, which continued to live there until the end of the eleventh century.¹⁰⁰ In 1088, in fact, the monastery was assigned, on Roger Borsa’s orders, to the Benedictine abbey of Cava de’ Tirreni. It remained its property up until 1106, when St Hadrian returned to Greek monks.¹⁰¹ Many scholars have dated the church and a part of its decoration (the *opus sectile* floor, the architectonic sculpture and the reuse of ancient material) to within the span of time under the new Latin owners.¹⁰² The church consists of three naves with a projecting semi-circular apse, the latter destroyed in the enlargement of the sanctuary that occurred in the eighteenth century. The wall construction is quite different compared to St John ‘Vecchio’ [35]. It contains regular courses of white stone with a few bricks, according to a technique that marks several buildings erected under the direct supervision of Norman patrons, like the royal abbey of Mileto [A]. However, the exterior walls are not homogenous from the point of view of decoration. The northern side is more decorated, with hanging arches outlined on ledges and with ceramic bowls, since it overlooked the medieval road.¹⁰³ The façade, now irreparably changed, had a porch with two column-bearing lions,¹⁰⁴ a feature that, like the other exterior and interior architectonic sculptures and also like the *opus sectile*, does not seem to depend on the local Byzantine tradition. The visual appearance of St Hadrian’s church is undeniably ‘foreign,’ giving the impression of a Latin building. Only the wall paintings (Figures 4.11–4.12), that – as we will show – are not contemporary, reveal a strong Byzantine mark. That does not necessarily mean that the Greek monks considered the church inadequate for their purposes, since the later changes did not affect the Latin elements.¹⁰⁵ In fact, it was very likely that the construction work that had started at the end of the eleventh century lasted several decades, during which time the church was returned from the Benedictines to the Greeks without any disruption in the plan of the building and its decorative program.

The other key monument, as we already pointed out, is Santa Maria del Patir [9] near Rossano (Figure 4.7c, 4.8), whose date is a *vexata quaestio*.¹⁰⁶ The present building, a basilica with three naves and three semi-circular projecting apses, is considered to be not the one built by Bartholomew, but by one of his successors, maybe Blasius, hegumen from at least 1152 and until the eighties of the twelfth century.¹⁰⁷ The latter is mentioned in the monumental inscription on the mosaic floor as “Blasius venerabilis abbas/hoc totum iussit fieri”. The fragmentary floor is the only decorative



Figure 4.8 Rossano (vicinity of), St Mary of Patir, the apse wall (second half of the 12th c.)

Photo: Lorenzo Riccardi.

element inside the church, although it was surely once also painted.¹⁰⁸ In the northern aisle, traces of *opus sectile* and of *opus tessellatum* remain, while the central nave presents a large part of *opus tessellatum* bearing the aforementioned inscription. In particular, the embellishment of the floor consists of real and imaginary animals (lion, griffin, centaur, unicorn, deer, jaguar?). The coexistence of two typologies of mosaics could not be due to a different chronology, but rather is the product of a uniform and coeval plan, that could date back to the second half of the twelfth century, maybe in the sixties or seventies, at a time when workers also floored the Cathedral [10] of Rossano in a very similar manner.¹⁰⁹

The Patir [9] is the last great foundation for the Greek monks in Calabria, since others of such importance are not known after the middle of the twelfth century. Such decline depended on the growing neglect towards the Greek community by the royal authority in the late Norman and Swabian era and also on the fact that the monastery of St Savior [β] at Messina shifted the barycenter of Greek monasticism towards Sicily. The reconstruction of the Patir itself [9] does not seem to be related to any donations or claims coming from the sovereigns,¹¹⁰ but rather was

due to their own circle of monks such as Blasius himself. If the Patir had so far sent its men and objects to Messina when the latter monastery was founded, the exchange happened in the opposite direction a few years later. This inversion is best testified by the marble baptismal font now at the Metropolitan Museum of Art in New York (Figure 4.9).

It bears a long inscription on the lip where the year of its execution, 1136–37, the patron Luke, first hegumen of the Sicilian monastery of St Savior, and King Roger are mentioned. This work had been most probably expressly carved for the Patir, as a present of the hegumen Luke to his motherhouse. At St Savior [β], indeed, there already was another baptismal font, dated 1135, in which we find engraved the names of its sculptor, Gandoulphos, and of its patron, the same Luke.¹¹¹ Stylistically, one could hardly define these two works as Byzantine *tout court*, given that various elements in them, as for example the small sculpted heads on the Messina font, reveal an artist who was only partially acquainted with Byzantine culture, and this was limited to decorative patterns alone.



Figure 4.9 New York, Metropolitan Museum of Art, baptismal font (1136–1137) from St Mary of Patir near Rossano

Photo: The Metropolitan Museum of Art, public domain.

In Calabria, this font at the Patir [9] is one of the most important pieces of evidence of Norman sculpture, extending to few other examples, such as the capitals from the abbey of the Holy Trinity [B] at Mileto (now in the local Museum). The cultural background of the latter is basically western-orientated showing a strong connection with Norman art in Southern Italy.¹¹² The sculpture for the Greek monks too, like those of St Hadrian [8] at San Demetrio Corone,¹¹³ reveals only vague references to the Byzantine tradition, in particular in the decorative patterns, that fall within a repertory then current across different traditions of artistic techniques, like the fragment with a snake and palmette walled up on the exterior wall, inspired by manuscript illumination patterns.¹¹⁴ Only the Corinthian capital inside the church is made by contemporary local workers, while the one opposite dates from the Augustan era and the others date from the early Middle Ages.¹¹⁵

The contrast between Calabrian Norman sculpture and the Greek *milieu* remains a trait in later art objects too, where the imported quality is even more self-evident – whether pertaining to ready-made objects or artisans on the move – coming from the great buildings erected by Roger II and William II, such as the cloisters of Cefalù and Monreale.¹¹⁶ The baptismal font in St Hadrian [8] at San Demetrio Corone, sadly stolen in 1986, can be ascribed to this process too, or perhaps to a western context,¹¹⁷ since it is difficult to consider it an example of local ‘Basilian art,’ as Orsi writes.¹¹⁸

Instead, stucco sculpture is worth a special discussion. This kind of work spreads in Calabria, from Castrovillari [5] to Rossano (Panagia) [13], from Gerace (St Giovannello [23], St Mary del Mastro [24] and Annunziatella – St Theodore [25])¹¹⁹ to the more important works of St Mary de Terreti [30] (Figure 4.10).¹²⁰ These fragments could be dated in the eleventh/twelfth century and belong to the architectural decoration (slabs, ciborium, friezes, capitals, archivolts) along with other sculptures of different material that seem to slavishly imitate them, like the limestone columns of Terreti and San Nicola de Calamizzi [29], now kept at the National Museum of Reggio Calabria.¹²¹ As Claudia Barsanti writes, their use “is not an alternative choice that replaces the more noble marble material, but a conscious choice that was influenced by foreign fascination from the Islamic world”.¹²² The better-preserved stucco panels from Terreti [30] (now in the National Museum of Reggio Calabria) include pseudo-Kufic inscriptions in the frames and contain a composition in eight round medallions disposed on two levels with facing peacocks and gazelles. The decorative patterns are drawn from Byzantine and Islamic patterns on cloth or from contemporary carvings, belonging to a heterogeneous cultural *milieu*.¹²³

Compared to the Norman buildings too, the reuse of ancient material is often limited to a utilitarian purpose, like columns, capitals and bases, that were employed in the more important places of the church, such as the sanctuary, like in the Patir [9] and in St Mary de Tridetti [35]. As we



Figure 4.10 Reggio Calabria, Museo nazionale della Magna Grecia, a stucco slab from St Mary of Terreti (12th c.)

Photo: from Orsi, Paolo. 1921–1922. ‘Placche di gesso decorate di arte arabo-normanna in S. Maria di Terreti presso Reggio Calabria.’ *Bollettino d’Arte* 15: 546–62.

noticed, the monastery of St Hadrian is an exception, since the ancient pieces were both reused and imitated with medieval equivalents.¹²⁴

Wall-painting between the Norman and Swabian eras

The most important monasteries of the Norman era have no paintings dating from the period of their construction. Furthermore, the later sources or the shallow traces do not permit to clarify whether they were originally decorated or not. The exemplary case is that of St Hadrian

[8], that was painted a century after it was built, as well the monastery of St John 'Vecchio' [17], that contains several later frescoes. However, some kind of decoration probably did exist, but it was destroyed by or replaced with a new one.¹²⁵

The material under discussion dates from the second half of the twelfth or the first decades of the thirteenth century, when new monasteries of some importance were no longer built, but nonetheless a series of updated painted decoration was promoted, like at San Demetrio Corone [8]. There is one notable earlier exception, the church 'dello Spedale' at Scalea, which contains frescoes from the second half of the eleventh century.

The monastic church of St Hadrian [8] displays wall-paintings in the intrados, along the aisles and in the nave. The iconographic programme consists of a single narrative image, the *Presentation of the Virgin*, placed between the third and the fourth arch of the right aisle. In the intrados and along the naves there are full-length portraits of saints, unfortunately not marked by inscriptions except for that of Julitta, Anastasia and Irene, between the second and the third arch of the right aisle.¹²⁶ The sixteen saints in the intrados, reading from the counter-façade to the lost apse, can nevertheless be plausibly identified thanks to their garments and the system by which they have been set in pairs, as follows: on the left side, 1. martyrs (unknown and St Cosmas), 2. martyrs (St Menas and unknown), 3. bishops (St Blasius and unknown), 4. monks [St Neilos (Figure 4.11) and unknown]; right side, 1. hermits [lost and St Onuphrios (Figure 4.12)], 2. martyrs (St Demetrios and St Theodore Tyron), 3. bishops (St Basil and St Nicholas), 4. bishops (St Athanasios and unknown).¹²⁷ The portraits along the nave and along the aisles are no longer identifiable: they may be Apostles or Prophets. If we exclude the two monks – located in a place of honor in the last intrados before the apse, and the hermits in the first bay –, the iconographic program bears no elements that emphasize the monastic function of the church.¹²⁸ In any case, the connection with the place's history and with Italo-Greek monasticism was clinched by the representation of St Neilos, founder of St Hadrian.¹²⁹ The frescoes appear of good quality, signifying the presence of a workshop of skilled artists conversant with the late-Comnenian trends current in the Byzantine *oikoumene*, perhaps coming from South Italy or from Greece.¹³⁰ These artists worked here between the end of the twelfth and the beginning of the thirteenth century for an unknown patron, although most probably from the monastic *milieu*, whose choice of a blunt Greek catalogue of saints is signaled by the securely attributed representations of Julitta, Irene and, in particular, of Anastasia 'pharmakolytria'.

The representation of monks – as we have said earlier – can be an important clue to clarify the function of a building. The church 'dello Spedale' [2] of Scalea, in fact, bears in the *prothesis* and in the *diakonikon* portraits of two holy monks (Figure 4.13).



Figure 4.11 San Demetrio Corone, St Hadrian, St Neilos (?) (late 12th–early 13th c.)

Photo: Giulio Archinà.

In the *diakonikon* the inscription, now evanesced, identified the old saint with St Phantinos, characterized by an emaciated face and by a red headcloth (maybe the cowl of the *koukoullion*) (Figure 4.14).¹³¹

The figure in the *prothesis* is not recognizable. Biagio Cappelli and other scholars postulated that this church could be identified with St Nicholas

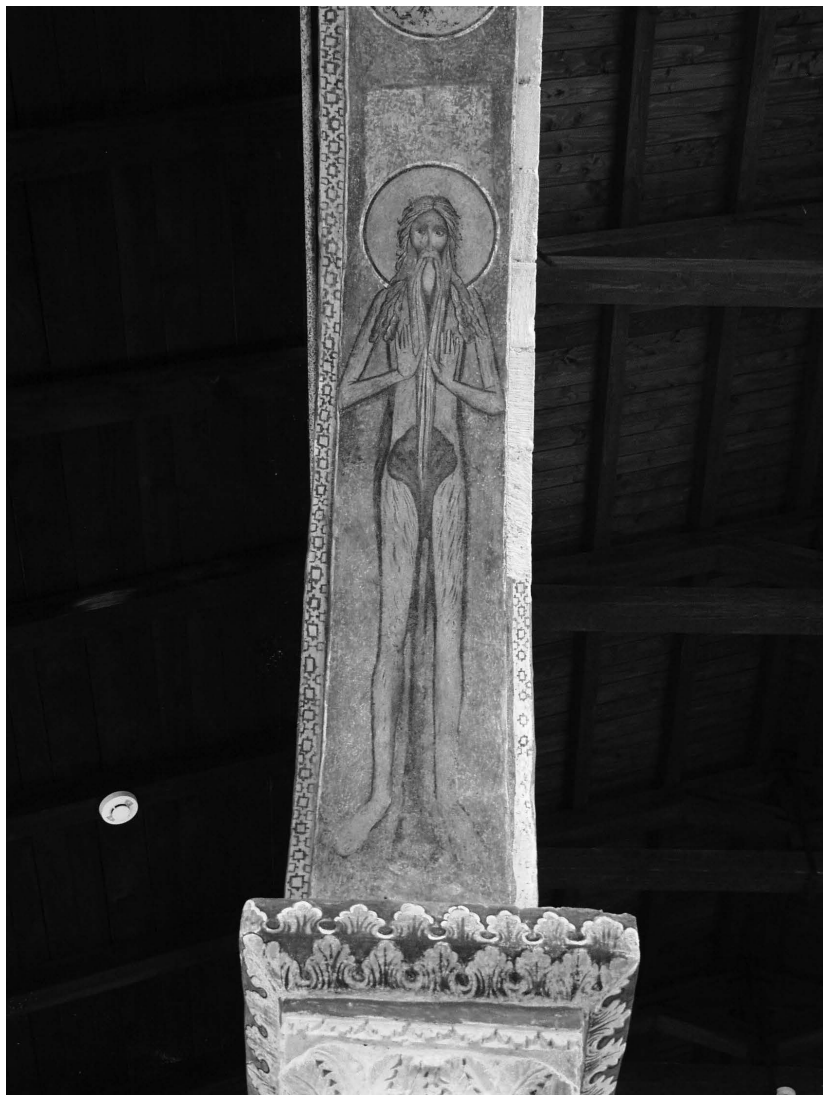


Figure 4.12 San Demetrio Corone, St Hadrian, *St Onuphrius* (late 12th–early 13th c.).

Photo: Giulio Archinà.

de Siracusa, grange of the monastery of St Mary of Rofrano, donated by Roger II in 1131 to the monastery of Grottaferrata.¹³² For Enrica Follieri the painted decoration should date around this year thereby reflecting the transfer of property. In fact, she positively proposed to identify the monk in the *prothesis* with St Neilos, disciple of Phantinos and founder of the



Figure 4.13 Scalea, church called ‘dello Spedale,’ the apse wall with the portraits in the niches of St Phantinos and of unknown monk (St Neilos?) (late 11th c.)

Photo: Lorenzo Riccardi.

monastery of Grottaferrata in 1004.¹³³ However, the style of the wall painting seems to suggest a somewhat earlier dating, perhaps in the second half of the eleventh century. The two monks were only one part of a much more extensive and interesting decorative cycle, that originally covered the whole sanctuary wall: there were also five bishops and a *Deesis* in the apse, some standing saints, among which Ezekiel, next to the two niches of the *prothesis* and the *diakonikon* respectively. Above the apse, on the plain wall, there was a huge narrative image (the *Ascension*?).

The presence of monks in the lateral niches of the sanctuary wall is not an *hapax*. Two portraits of monastic figures can be found in the ruined small church of St Anastasios [33] at Fossato Jonico, not far from Reggio Calabria. They bear no inscription and are nowadays almost evanesced. The saints seem to wear a cowl. The monk in the *prothesis* could be Philaretos, while the other one in the *diakonikon* has been identified with St Athanasios.¹³⁴ The current state of conservation does not allow secure dating for the building and the wall-paintings. In the nearby church of St Anthony [32] at Santo Niceto (Motta San Giovanni), a monk is standing in the *prothesis*, clothed in a red cloak and gripping a stick with his right hand.¹³⁵ A dating around

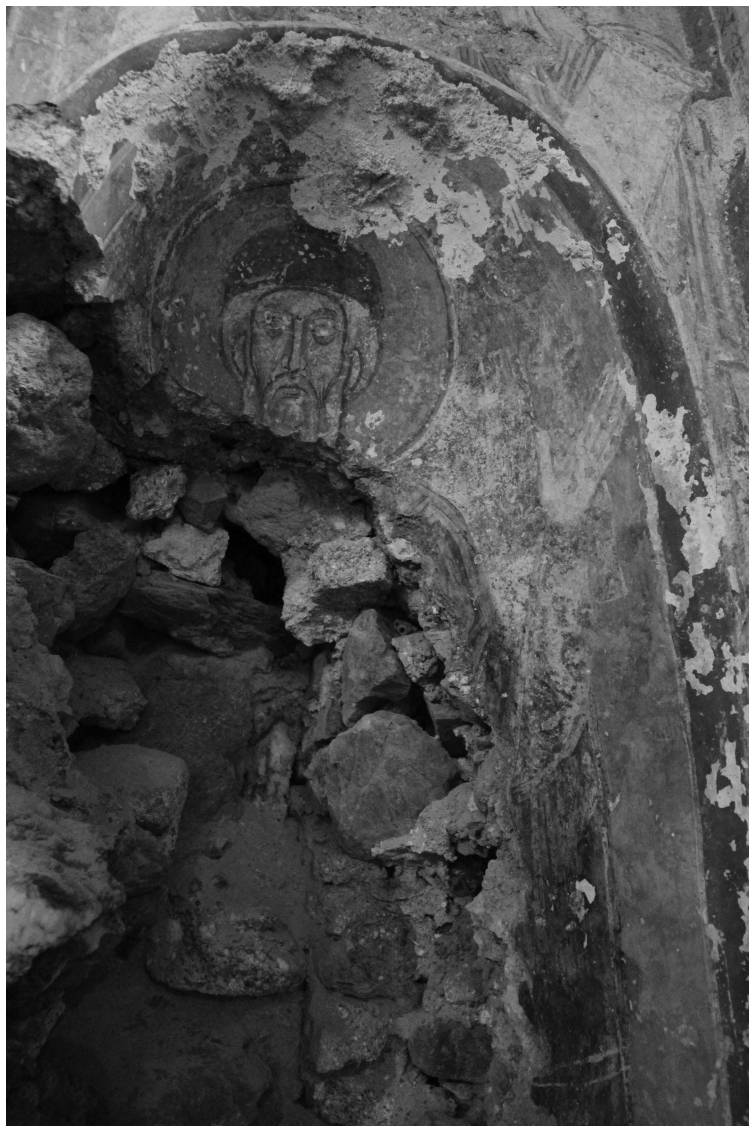


Figure 4.14 Scalea, church called ‘dello Spedale,’ *St Phantinos* (late 11th c.)
Photo: Antonino Tranchina.

the twelfth century was proposed for both the building and the fresco, but they seem later.¹³⁶ In other Calabrian churches we can find bishops in place of monks, like in *St Nicholas* [34] at Amendolea¹³⁷ or in the ‘Armenia’ castle at *St Mary of the Annunciation* [36] at Bruzzano Vecchio.¹³⁸

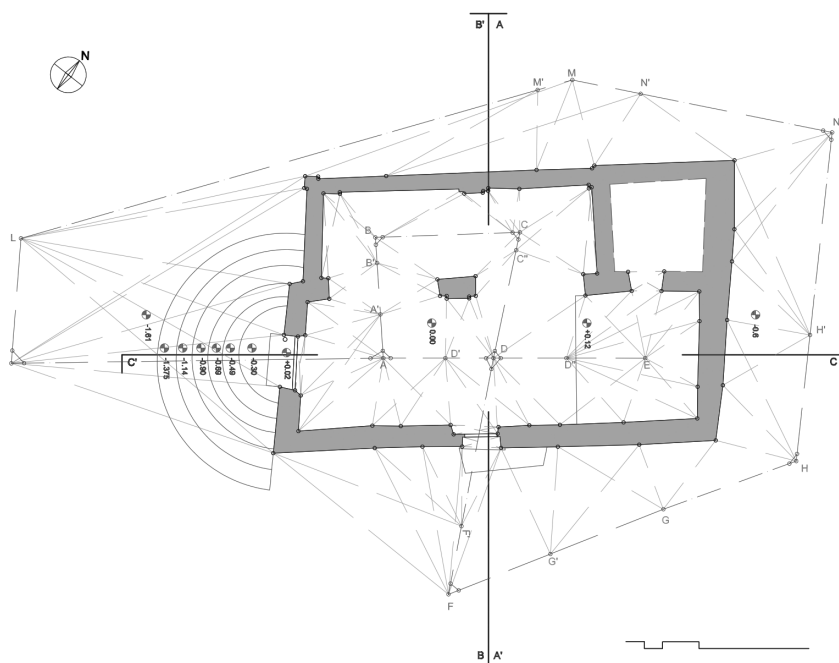


Figure 4.15 San Donato di Ninea, St Donatus ‘al Pantano,’ plan (late 11th–18th c.)
Drawing: Silvia Chiavoni, Elisa Piselli.

A particular monastic iconography appears in St Donatus ‘al Pantano’ [6] at San Donato di Ninea.¹³⁹ It was originally a single-aisled church, but another aisle and a sacristy were later added on its left side (Figure 4.15).

For several architectonic reasons and on the basis of the first layer of the aforementioned frescoes – notably the bishops on the right side (Figure 4.16a)–, it is possible to date it in the second half of the eleventh century. Later, at the end of the twelfth or at beginning of the thirteenth century, broader wall-paintings covered the right wall and the counter-façade. The frescoes on the right wall consist, reading them from left to right, of a panel with the Archangel Michael (Μηχα/[ηλ] Αρ/χη/στράτ/[ηγ] ος) and St Paraskevi (Παρα/[σκ]ε/βι·) (Figure 4.16b-c); of another panel with Christ and the inscription “remember your servant” (Μνησθη/[τι] του / [δουλου σου]) (Figure 4.16d) and, lastly, of a large representation of the *Koimesis* (Figure 4.16e). Between the latter and the *Crucifixion*, that is on the counter-façade, lie, always on the right side, some paintings displaying a monastic subject. Two monks (Figures 4.16f, 4.17), taller than life, wear the typical pointed headdress, the *koukoullion*, that in the case



Figure 4.16 San Donato di Ninea, St Donatus ‘al Pantano,’ the right wall with several layers of frescoes. Late 11th c.: *Bishops* (a). Late 12th–early 13th c.: *Archangel* (b), *St Paraskevi* (c), *Christ* (d), *Koimesis* (e); the *Vita icon* (?) of *St Anthony and St Leonard* (f)

Drawing: Silvia Chiavoni, Elisa Piselli.

of the saint on the right continues into the *anabolos*, while for the saint on the left a brown cloak is worn over it (Figure 4.18).

These monks could be identified with Anthony ([Αντ]ον/νῆος)¹⁴⁰ and Leonard (Ο αγιος [. . .]), the latter thanks to the marks of the chains and the crozier with a zoomorphic scroll. The choice to represent them next to the counter-façade and in front of the original entrance could explain the function of this building at that time, surely a Greek monastery in the fifteenth century, when it is mentioned for the first time. On their left side there are at least two small frames (Figure 4.19). The one that is better preserved shows two monks with haloes wearing the *koukoullion* and the *anabolos*, the tunic and the cloak, turned towards the standing saints (Figure 4.20). They are not engaged in any specific action and occupy a generic place sketchily represented by a red mass, perhaps the outline of a mountain. No inscriptions identify them and their features are identical. This frame is placed above another similar one, which contains only one monk. However, the original frames were more, numerous than the ones now extant: there were perhaps up to five. Their subjects do not seem to be identifiable as narrative scenes related to Anthony and Leonard, who have a very different and not interconnected personal history. It is more plausible that they relate exclusively to Anthony, who spent part of his life in the desert, that was the ‘house’ of other coeval saints.



Figure 4.17 San Donato di Ninea, St Donatus ‘al Pantano,’ the *Vita icon* (?) of St Anthony and St Leonard (late 12th – early 13th c.)

Photo: Lorenzo Riccardi.

Could these roundels be taken collectively as a synthetic representation of Anthony’s environment in the Thebaid, according to the iconography of a *Vita icon*? In that case, this might be among the earliest surviving *Vita icons* from Southern Italy. Its early date might then explain some of



Figure 4.18 San Donato di Ninea, St Donatus ‘al Pantano,’ the *Vita icon* (?) of St Anthony and St Leonard, detail (late 12th – early 13th c.)

Photo: Lorenzo Riccardi.

the less usual features in the composition of this singular fresco.¹⁴¹ The two standing monks, along with the Christ of the devotional panel, are due to a more skilled painter than the one who painted the other narrative scenes (*Koimesis* and *Crucifixion*). Both draw their figures in a



Figure 4.19 San Donato di Ninea, St Donatus ‘al Pantano,’ the *Vita icon* (?) of St Anthony and St Leonard, detail (late 12th – early 13th c.)

Photo: Lorenzo Riccardi.

severe and monumental style, according to a widespread vogue of the late Komnenian time, attested in particular from the apse of Monreale (around 1180s).

In St John ‘Vecchio’ or ‘Terista’ [17], on the northern wall of the northern bay of the sanctuary, a fresco with an unmistakable *Vita icon* of



Figure 4.20 San Donato di Ninea, St Donatus ‘al Pantano,’ the *Vita icon* (?) of St Anthony and St Leonard, detail (late 12th – early 13th c.)

Photo: Lorenzo Riccardi.

the homonymous saint is preserved (Figure 4.21). Unfortunately much restored by overpainting, its appearance and the shape of the frames suggest a late date, maybe in the first half of the fifteenth century. However, John’s *Vita icon* is interesting because it testifies to the great fortune of this iconography, which in Southern Italy consists of almost thirty cases



Figure 4.21 Bivongi, St John ‘Vecchio’ or ‘Terista,’ the *Vita icon* of St John ‘Terista’ (15th c.)

Photo: Lorenzo Riccardi.

extant both in ground-level churches and in caves. As regards the latter examples, it appears as an important exception, seeing that it is the only one that was specifically tailored to represent an Italo-Greek monk of huge local popularity and veneration.¹⁴² The inside of the church, that is currently undergoing restoration thanks to which several wall-paintings

are being rediscovered, shows no other frescoes of monastic subject. Furthermore, the present state of conservation of the frescoes does not enable one to pick out a homogeneous iconographical programme,¹⁴³ since the fragments date from different periods and seem to be limited to devotional representations, such as the *Virgin enthroned with the Child* (now stolen), perhaps of the second half of the thirteenth century. St John 'Vecchio' was also decorated on the exterior walls, a very rare feature in Southern Italy, but more common in Byzantine churches, in particular of mainland Greece. Nowadays, there are: a) on the south wall of the nave, a great number of small painted fragments, some of which with Greek letters; b) inside the western niche of the southern arm of the sanctuary, two haloed figures above and another one, as an orans, below (the Virgin?); c) inside the western niche of the northern arm of the sanctuary, the standing orans *Virgin* with the inscription ἡ Ἐλεούσα (of tenderness or showing mercy), a characterization that however has no connection with this iconographic type.¹⁴⁴ The latter fresco, now detached, enables us to date the exterior decoration to the second half of the twelfth century.

Book production makes up an important part of monastic life in this period too. Bartholomew, the first hegumen of the Patir, put a lot of work into constituting a *scriptorium*, where – as we have seen – several manuscripts had arrived also from Constantinople. As Canart writes,

avant même la fondation ou la réorganisation du fameux monastère du Patir dans les premières années du XII^e s., s'affirme un style d'écriture et d'ornementation *sui generis*. L'écriture conserve des particularités locales d'orthographe et d'abréviation, mais elle semble subir, dans une certaine mesure, l'influence de la *Perlschrift* constantinopolitaine désormais en voie de dissolution; en tout cas, la décoration, elle, dans son style carminé, adopte et adapte des formules de la capitale.¹⁴⁵

These innovations are grafted onto a long tradition that works as a basis for its development,¹⁴⁶ but the products are often modest, in particular from the point of view of the decoration.¹⁴⁷

Conclusions

Despite the scarce and discontinuous testimonies, one may not speak of 'monastic art' in Calabria for the Byzantine and Norman periods, if by that phrase one is indicating an artistic production specifically devised by and executed for the monks. As such, it is impossible to pinpoint the evidence with certainty, especially regarding the qualitative aspect, given the wide variety of stylistic achievement under consideration, ranging from the frescoes at St Donatus at Ninea to those at St Hadrian, or from the buildings at St John 'Vecchio' to those at the Patir. The pair of adjectives, "popular and monastic", applied to the Virgin *Acheiropita*

in Rossano Cathedral (itself a work not destined for a monastic *milieu*), is thus unhelpfully restrictive. Equally, there is no evidence of a specific structural plan or iconographical programme that would enable one to discriminate with precision between a church with monastic and one with other functions, as we have illustrated above by examining the paintings at San Demetrio Corone. Thus art and architecture for Greek monks in Southern Italy ought to be studied in the context of the whole coeval production rather than as an isolated chapter in and of itself.

Having a broader historical perspective helps in recognizing a greater vitality – especially in architecture – in the Norman period. It appears characterized by more monumental-scale achievements and to blend disparate elements resulting in a mixed style, with non-Byzantine elements grafted onto the local production through the impact of the new dominance, such as at St John ‘Vecchio’ and St Mary de Tridetti. Some buildings realized by Benedictine monks on the basis of a pre-existent Byzantine structure display many Latin elements, that tend to remain untouched even when the foundations return to the Greek cult (St Hadrian at San Demetrio Corone). Earlier, according to the near-legendary hagiographical narratives, edifices were poorly and carelessly built.

Nevertheless, Greek monasticism contributed in a fundamental way not only to the process of hellenization in Calabria, but also to making Byzantine culture more widespread. If the manuscripts copied at this time do not exhibit any rich decoration, at the same time the scribal activity carries on with great perseverance and effectiveness in the monastic *scriptoria* – whether stable or just occasional – as St Neilos and St Bartholomew of Simeri attest. Calabrian monks will be the bearers of culture both in the Byzantine and Norman periods, when kings would call upon them for tasks of great responsibility and prestige, singling out Leontius at Gerace and St Bartholomew at the Patir near Rossano.

Notes

- 1 Cf. Russo 1953; Roma 1988.
- 2 Vaccari 1925, 274.
- 3 Lazarev 1967, 231.
- 4 Mango 1978, 54.
- 5 Falla Castelfranchi 1992, 149.
- 6 Cf. Peters-Custot 2009.
- 7 Minuto 1990, 316–31.
- 8 Guillou 1974. Cf. von Falkenhausen 1978; Peters-Custot 2009, 197–219.
- 9 Von Falkenhausen 1978, 39–49.
- 10 Von Falkenhausen 1978, 49–55. Cf. Cilento 2000, 146–55.
- 11 Roma 2006, 505–8.
- 12 Cappelli 1952, 191. For a different interpretation of this work, cf. Leone 1984.
- 13 Guillou 1996, 149–51.
- 14 Cuteri 1998, 63–8.

- 15 Falla Castelfranchi 2006, 214. She dates these paintings to the beginning of the tenth century, but they seem to be probably datable slightly later, maybe in the second half of the same century.
- 16 See, with previous bibliography, von Falkenhausen 2009 and Falla Castelfranchi 2009.
- 17 See below and n. 58.
- 18 Giovanelli 1972, 89–90, nos. 45–46.
- 19 Giovanelli 1972, 81–2, no. 36.
- 20 Giovanelli 1972, 111–12, no. 72.
- 21 Giovanelli 1972, 111–12, no. 72.
- 22 von Falkenhausen 1978, 32.
- 23 Morini 1999, 277–82.
- 24 Cf. Bertelli 2007, 115–16.
- 25 Minuto 1999, 357–64.
- 26 Bertelli 2007, 118–19.
- 27 Picone Chiodo 1998, 489–99.
- 28 Picone Chiodo 1998, 491; Minuto and Venoso 1999, 363–4.
- 29 Minuto 1977b, 363–4; Falla Castelfranchi 2000, 99.
- 30 Cf. Cappelli 1935, tav. XVIII; Falla Castelfranchi 2000, 99.
- 31 Cf. Cunsolo 1965, 214.
- 32 Minuto 1977b, 364 and n. 47; Falla Castelfranchi 2000, 98.
- 33 Cf. n. 31.
- 34 Cf. Falla Castelfranchi 2000, 100.
- 35 Leone 2000, 112–13.
- 36 Falla Castelfranchi 2000, 89–97; Leone 2000.
- 37 Falla Castelfranchi 2000, 95. Cf. Leone 2002.
- 38 Cf. Dalena 2007.
- 39 For example, we can recall the cave of St Michael at San Donato di Ninea (CS): Roma 2001, 67–96.
- 40 Minuto and Venoso 1999, 340–3. Cf. Bozzoni 1999, 284.
- 41 Wharton 1988, 130–1.
- 42 See below and n. 130.
- 43 Falla Castelfranchi 1991, 29–30.
- 44 See below and n. 140.
- 45 Minuto and Venoso 1985, 28–9, 162.
- 46 Minuto 1990, 349, no. 103.
- 47 Di Dario Guida 1984, 100, 107 and fig. 45.
- 48 Pace 1994, 286, and Leone 2003, 151, 163 n. 90.
- 49 Cf. n. 10.
- 50 Roma 2006.
- 51 Toivanen 2007, 170–3.
- 52 Orsi 1929, 33–4; Venditti 1967, 856.
- 53 Cuteri 1997, 62, 80; Cuteri, Hyeraci and Salamida 2011, 363, 365–6.
- 54 Leone 1996, 20.
- 55 Bozzoni 1998, 394.
- 56 Cappelli 1955, 36 and, more recently, Falla Castelfranchi 2003, 26.
- 57 Orsi 1929, 182 and, more recently, Coscarella 2012.
- 58 See below and nn. 18–19.
- 59 D’Agostino 2011, 42–6.
- 60 Pesce 1936. Cf. Bertelli 2007, 131–2; Minuto 2011, 133–7.
- 61 Cf. Mastelloni 1997; Malacrino and Tedesco 2011.
- 62 Falla Castelfranchi 2004; Bruno 2004.
- 63 Toivanen 2007, 161–6, 208–13; Ćurčić 2010, 422–9.

- 64 Cuteri 2003, 122.
- 65 Cuteri 2003, 121.
- 66 Cuteri 2003, 122.
- 67 Morrone 1998; Pensabene 2003; Malacrino and Todesco 2009, 77.
- 68 Minuto 1990, 379–83; Agostino and Sica 2012.
- 69 Lucà 2009, 102 n. 9.
- 70 Giovanelli 1972, 63, no. 15.
- 71 Giovanelli 1972, 67, no. 20.
- 72 Cavallo 1982, 523. Cf. Lucà 1989; Aletta 2003a; Hutter 2006.
- 73 Aletta 2003b; Hutter 2009.
- 74 von Falkenhausen 1977; von Falkenhausen 1983; Becker 2008, 203–17.
- 75 Breccia 2005, 77–81.
- 76 Breccia 2005, 28–34, 81–8.
- 77 von Falkenhausen 1994; Tranchina 2015.
- 78 Batiffol 1891, 7; Mercati 1939.
- 79 Riccardi 2013.
- 80 Canart 1978, 157–9; Cavallo 1982, 543; Canart 1983, 144–52.
- 81 Lucà 1993, 28.
- 82 D’Onofrio 1993; Bozzoni 1999, 288–94 (with previous bibliography).
- 83 Schwarz 1942–1944, 19–22; Schwarz 1961; Zinzi 2003, 44–51 (with previous bibliography).
- 84 Mercati, Giannelli and Guillou 1980, 59–61, no. 4.
- 85 Mercati, Giannelli and Guillou 1980, 72–3, no. 7.
- 86 Cf. Bozzoni 1974, 38, 59 n. 87.
- 87 Mercati, Giannelli and Guillou 1980, 108–10, no. 16.
- 88 Cuteri and Iannelli 2000, 218; Cuteri 2003, 117–18.
- 89 Schwarz 1942–1944, 5–40; Bozzoni 1974, 21–63.
- 90 Nicklies 2004, 103.
- 91 Zinzi 1988, 256–7; Nicklies 2004, 107.
- 92 Cf. Cuteri 2003; Nicklies 2004.
- 93 Minuto 1977b, 251–8.
- 94 Zinzi 2003, 51–5 (with previous bibliography).
- 95 Minuto 1990, 341 n. 81.
- 96 Zinzi 2003, 55–8 (with previous bibliography).
- 97 Zinzi 2003, 58.
- 98 Mastelloni 1997. They are now kept between the church of St Mary of the Annunciation at Reggio Calabria, where they were placed in the nineteenth century, and in the storage of the National Museum of Reggio Calabria.
- 99 See below and n. 120.
- 100 Di Silvio 2012, 46.
- 101 Martino 1998, 254–6.
- 102 Venditti 1967, 945; Venditti 1968, 15–16; Bozzoni 1999, 298.
- 103 Martelli 1956, 166. Cf. Cuteri 2003, 109–10.
- 104 Orsi 1929, 158.
- 105 Lavermicocca 1983.
- 106 Coscarella 1997; Bozzoni 1999, 296; Tabanelli 2016.
- 107 Coscarella 1997, 435.
- 108 Adorisio 1980, 63.
- 109 Coscarella 1997, 432–3.
- 110 Breccia 2005, 91–7.
- 111 Zinzi 1996; Iacobini, D’Achille 2014; Tranchina 2016.
- 112 Di Dario Guida 2006, 50–1.
- 113 These sculptures are not sufficiently studied, since it is plausible that they are later resettled and adapted and, if they are not from different periods,

- are at least made from different workers. Cf. Di Dario Guida 2006, 51–2, 56, 58–89.
- 114 Di Dario Guida 2006, fig. 12.
 - 115 Pensabene 2003, 88–9.
 - 116 Di Dario Guida 2006, 60–72.
 - 117 Zinzi 1996, 15–17, figs. 16–18.
 - 118 Orsi 1929, 176–9.
 - 119 Lipinsky 1963; Cannatà 1997; Di Gangi 1995.
 - 120 Orsi 1921–1922; Zinzi 1988, 258–9.
 - 121 Orsi 1929, 102–3; Venditti 1967, 875–6, 929–31.
 - 122 Barsanti 1989, 351.
 - 123 Barsanti 1989, 357–64; Di Gangi 1995; Caskey 2011.
 - 124 Cf. n. 66.
 - 125 Cf. Leone 2003.
 - 126 About the iconographic programme, cf. Lavermicocca 1981, 346; Lavermicocca 1983, 294–9; Falla Castelfranchi 1991, 37–9; Leone 2003, 147–50; Martino 1998, 263–6; Di Silvio 2012, 48–51.
 - 127 According to Di Silvio 2012, 49.
 - 128 Cf. n. 125; Falla Castelfranchi 1992, 149.
 - 129 Cf. Leone 2009, 198–9.
 - 130 Rotili 1980, 156; Lavermicocca 1981, 308; Falla Castelfranchi 1991, 38–9; Pace 2003, 116, 118.
 - 131 Falla Castelfranchi 1991, 31.
 - 132 Cappelli 1963, 17; Follieri 1993, 347–8.
 - 133 Follieri 1993, 347–8.
 - 134 Minuto 2002, 62.
 - 135 Minuto and Venoso 1985, 112; Falla Castelfranchi 2002, 118.
 - 136 Falla Castelfranchi 2002, 118.
 - 137 Minuto 1969, 311, 316 n. 16, fig. 49.
 - 138 Minuto and Venoso 1985, 97.
 - 139 Riccardi 2011.
 - 140 I had earlier excluded St Anthony because of a different reading of the inscription (Riccardi 2011, 59 n. 18). This saint had been correctly identified by Martucci 2006, 139, followed by Falla Castelfranchi 2013, 179.
 - 141 As Falla Castelfranchi 2013, 180 suggests too.
 - 142 Riccardi 2012, 169, no. III.a. Cf. Riccardi 2015.
 - 143 Cf. Orsi 1929, 48–54; Falla Castelfranchi 1991, 35–6; Leone 2003, 143–4 (with previous bibliography).
 - 144 Leone 1998, 30–1, no. 1.
 - 145 Canart 1978, 112.
 - 146 Lucà 1985–1986.
 - 147 Cf. Aletta 2003a, 153–4; Hutter 2006, 90–3.

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5 Family hagiography and Christian resistance in the tenth century

The *Bioi* of Sabas,
Christopher and Makarios

Adele Cilento

In the hagiography relative to Byzantine Southern Italy in the ninth and tenth centuries, a special place is held by the *Lives* of Saints Sabas, Christopher and Makarios, three Greek monks belonging to a Sicilian family from Collesano, near Palermo. The most extensive text is dedicated to Sabas, the elder of the two sons, whereas a more synthetic narrative celebrates the father, Christopher, and the younger son, Makarios. Father and sons shared a tenth-century ascetic experience that first began in Sicily and that continued throughout their stay in Calabria. Indeed, the entire family escaped from the Aghlabid domination that was rapidly advancing over the central and western areas of Sicily, and, fearing further oppression of the population, moved to Calabria along with other Christian groups. Subsequently, in the hope of finding more isolated and tranquil places, the family continued northwards, up to the borderland between Calabria and Lucania, thereby following an itinerary common in those centuries among Greek monks.¹

Thanks to the vast amount of information on the steps taken by these saints and their disciples during their ascetic journeys, these *bioi*, and in particular the more extensive *bios* of Sabas, constitute one of the most important testimonies for the study of the spiritual and organizational aspects of Italo-Greek monasticism.² Furthermore they represent one of the most significant examples of the so-called “historical hagiography”, which has proved fundamental in reconstructing the historical background of Sicily and of Calabria in the second half of the tenth century. Indeed, in these *Lives* there are specific references made regarding people, places and events that have been, in many cases, corroborated by historiographical sources of the time.³ In other cases, they represent the only evidence for important historical data, that otherwise would be unknown.

Despite the wealth of detail and significance of these *bioi*, the need for a critical revision of the texts is nonetheless still strong: the only critical edition in existence dates back to 1893, but today, it seems both obsolete

and inadequate.⁴ However, this need is true of a large number of Greek hagiographical works from Southern Italy, as scholars have repeatedly pointed out in recent decades.⁵ Currently, excluding a small number of important and more recent publications, almost all the available editions are to some extent dated.⁶

Another element that renders the *Lives* of Sabas, Christopher and Makarios particularly noteworthy concerns their author, a distinguished representative of the Oriental Church: Orestes, Patriarch of Jerusalem. This element cannot be underestimated since hagiographers in the Italo-Greek environment usually belonged to the monastic *entourage* that had sprung up around the saint himself and, more often than not, were anonymous. Therefore they generally had close ties with a specific locality and community. Yet in this case this author, Orestes is a very important individual given the high ecclesiastical status he held from 986, that is, several years before writing the *bioi*. The composition of the hagiographical texts can in fact be dated to a period shortly after the death of these ascetics, which is dated 991 for Sabas, and ten years later, in 1001, for Makarios.⁷ Moreover, as we shall see, the importance of the hagiographer lies in the role he played in the international politics of the Mediterranean area during the tenth century. Recent studies have reconstructed his diplomatic activities involving Byzantium, Sicily and Egypt in favor of the Christian subjects who lived in the lands of the Fatimid Caliphate.

Awareness of the relationship between the protagonists of the *Lives* and their author – whose world was effectively distant geographically but not so far away in the Christian ecumenical perception – is, without doubt, crucial in order to understand the role of Italo-Greek monastic settlements within the intricate network of relations between the Western and Eastern Churches. Moreover, as a whole, the issues included in these *bioi* represent important evidence of the Byzantine provinces's political standing faced with an Islamic advance.

In comparing the *bioi* of the three Sicilian monks with other contemporary Byzantine hagiographical works, another essential issue, which has not yet been sufficiently examined, comes to light: the role of the family. In this paper we therefore intend to examine if, in parallel to the development throughout these centuries of a family hagiography in Constantinople and in other Byzantine provinces, it is possible to speak of a “family hagiography” relative to Byzantine Southern Italy. In other words, we wish to understand if the ideal of sanctity in Italo-Greek hagiography could refer not just to the individual monk, but rather be defined by the family group. We would like to demonstrate that the hagiographical texts referring to Sabas, Christopher and Makarios do, for all intents and purposes, underline that all the members of the family reached fame for founding monasteries and became guides as holy men. This orientation towards sanctity rooted in the family and in the environment in which it operated is strongly emphasized.

Family and saints in Byzantine hagiography (ninth–tenth centuries)

The relationship between the monastic condition and the family in Byzantium has been frequently investigated in modern historiography, for both its anthropological matrix and its social and political implications.⁸

Religious and family ties have, from the very dawn of the Christian era, been conceived of as both similar and antithetical at the same time. Among the sacrifices implicit in the choice of a monastic life is, first and foremost, the forsaking of all family ties, not only marriage but also those with parents, brothers, sisters, daughters and sons. The moment in which the family of origin is abandoned constitutes, in fact, a key step in the ascetic formation, which can be understood on a literary level as one of the recurrent *topoi* within Byzantine hagiographical narratives. Moreover hagiographical episodes that relate abandonment or rejection of the family are connected to another key moment in hagiographic narrations: the affiliation of the young ascetic to a spiritual father who metaphorically goes through the pains of childbirth “to give birth [to his disciple] through the Bible”.⁹ This was an effective metaphor used in the *Life* of Euthymios, which is often exploited in Eastern monastic texts to indicate this form of paternity.¹⁰ As Dirk Krausmüller has recently stated, “the use of the appellation ‘father’ and ‘son’ and the verb ‘[to] give birth’ suggest that the Byzantines themselves conceived of relationships between mentors and disciples as alternative families, in which the mentors took the place of both parents”.¹¹

Although the monastic ideal imposed a forsaking of all ties with family and friends in order to become part of a new social community, members of the same family often lived in the same monastery. This trend can be clearly seen in ancient Egyptian monasticism. One of the clearest cases concerns Shenoute (348–466), archimandrite of the monastery of Atripe (later known as the White monastery), about whom there is an abundance of evidence concerning family issues. In *Canon* 3 of the rules of his community, for example, Shenoute tries to split the monks in his monastery into two groups: those who have a family and those who do not. Instead in *Canon* 4 he invites all spiritual fathers to punish both their biological and their spiritual sons.¹² The continuation of the family ties within the monastic context – marked by the unequivocal expression *κατὰ σάρξ* – seems to point to this option in the Egyptian context as one that cannot be denied. In other words, the new family or monastic community did not cancel but simply modified biological relations.

In Byzantium, young people in particular were encouraged to enter the same monastery in which one of their relatives, usually an aunt or an uncle, had already taken vows. The best known of such instances is that of Theodore Stoudite, who entered the monastery of Sakkoudion in Bithynia, thanks to the encouragement of his maternal uncle, Plato, and,

after the latter's death, took his place as *higumenos*.¹³ This custom was to continue for centuries, as illustrated by the fact that as late as the thirteenth century Athanasios, the future Patriarch of Constantinople, had as a youth embraced monastic life by becoming a novice in the monastery of his paternal uncle at Thessaloniki.¹⁴ Even on Mount Athos, where one would expect the forsaking of family and worldly ties to be more extreme, there are examples of brothers, fathers, sons and other combinations of relatives entering the same monastery or together setting up new communities.¹⁵ In some cases, after having begun a monastic life, the young man brought all the females of the family into the monastery. This is what Euthymios the Younger does with his mother, sisters and wife, but not his daughter who decides to marry "for the perpetuation of the family". Later on, the same Euthymios would establish on his own land a "double" monastery, for men and women, which would be directed by his grandson and his granddaughter. This occurred even though these kinds of foundations, where monks and nuns lived together in separated buildings, were officially forbidden in Byzantium.¹⁶

Even more thoroughly examined are the social and political implications between hagiography and family. Particularly explored is the valence that a monastery or a saint's cult exerted in rooting a family group in a given territory. Studies on the Byzantine aristocracy during the tenth and eleventh centuries have amply brought to light the relationship between sanctity and lineage as one of the distinctive traits in society during this period. Consequently, this was one of the factors characterizing hagiographical production.¹⁷ It is well documented that the family descent of the saint, along with his social position, are always referred to in hagiographical accounts. This allows for a reading on two different but complementary levels: on one hand, the glorification of the saint through aristocratic references; on the other, the celebration of families or lineages in relation to sanctity.¹⁸ A number of studies have suggested that hagiographical narratives may take the form of a true or proper "family script". The most famous example is the *Life* of Theodora of Thessaloniki, a text rich in references to the family. The first of these relates the fact that Saint Theodora shared her monastic experience with her daughter, living for some time in the same monastery.¹⁹ However the family connections in this *bios* extend further than the immediate saint's family, working on multiple levels. As Michel Kaplan has shown, beyond the celebration of Theodora's family, the text is conceived to establish the credibility of the family of the hagiographer, the monk Gregory. During the transfer of relics of the saint a large number of miracles were said to have occurred, thus evincing the favor shown by the saint towards the local clergy to which Gregory's father belonged. Beyond the celebration of the hagiographer, Theodora's *bios* especially represents a powerful glorification of the saint's family, one of the most influential families in Thessalonica which in the ninth century had supported iconoclasm. Therefore

it was necessary, at the beginning of the tenth century, to create a new image of this family group striving for social rehabilitation. Thanks to a number of episodes concerning the saint's relatives, the entire family was cleared of all suspicion of iconoclasm and could finally be celebrated as a pillar of iconodulism.²⁰

The mechanisms with which the family could be glorified were numerous in Byzantine hagiographical narratives. During the tenth century both Constantinople and the imperial provinces witnessed a growing number of new cases of monastic sanctity.²¹ In particular, the Byzantine hagiographical model insisted on the lineage (*genos*), on the place of origin of the saint's family, but also on the dynamics of the separation from relatives and from the world at large, as well as on the return to society and to its ties with the family itself.²² These elements are in relation to the social and economic changes that occurred in Byzantine society during the tenth century. In particular, this phenomenon is connected to the ascent of an aristocracy that increasingly justified itself through blood ties and therefore needed legitimization in the form of hagiographical narrative.²³

In the case of the *Lives* of Sabas, Christopher and Makarios, the references to the family are completely different. None of the Italo-Greek saints from the tenth and eleventh centuries can boast distinguished lineages or families that belonged to the local aristocracy. The sanctity of Christopher and his sons was not influenced by such facts, which, on the contrary, appear so important in contemporary Byzantine hagiography. Instead, the sanctity of these men is closely tied to a rural context and to the survival of the Christian community in the face of a threatening Islamic advance. Their heroism was determined by the effort to ensure the continuity of the Christian faith, bringing into the family the monastic vocation and creating new foundations able to attract a large number of followers. The relationships among kinsmen in these *bioi*, far from defining the concept of *genos* as a constitutive element of aristocratic sanctity, seem rather to suggest the idea of a metaphorical *genos*, that is, of a spiritual and cultural sense of belonging which prevails over the biological one.

Family relationships in the bios of Sabas

The hagiographer's first reference to Sabas's family closely follows the standard norm of hagiography: "His parents, adorned by their distinguished behavior and most well exercised in virtue, were called Christopher and Kali."²⁴ Shortly after, the figure of his mother is associated with another well-known *cliché*: an Annunciation-type prodigy. The conception of the child was, in fact, announced to the mother in a dream in which a shining star entered the body of the woman through her mouth. The image was simple, but possessed a great evocative power.²⁵

Sabas's father is only introduced in the following paragraphs and he is clearly presented as a precursor of the principal protagonist. It is the father who discovers the extraordinary virtues of the son and who, to a large extent, is instrumental in the gradual revealing of his sanctity. Indeed, having foreseen that he himself would bring forth such a great and beautiful seed, Christopher decides to embrace the life of a hermit in order to prepare the path for the child destined for glory.²⁶ Leaving both mother and son, Christopher thus sets out for the Oratory of Saint Philip of Agira where, under the guidance of Nikephoros – a monk whose fame was already widespread in the area – he takes the monastic habit.²⁷

At this point, the hagiography narrates the events of the saint's father before moving on to the second part of the *bios*, which is specifically dedicated to Sabas himself. This part of the text immediately highlights that the father's monastic vows were instrumental to the son's future sanctity. Indeed, the moment the news of Christopher's ascetic deeds spreads, the young boy turns to his father, as the text says, "having learnt everything from his father, and with a heart burning with divine passion and hating all things which may weaken the souls of the young".²⁸ Christopher, having welcomed the son with intense joy, leads him to the great Nikephoros so that he may receive in turn the tonsure. In a wholly predictable semantic game on the term *pater* (πατήρ), a biological paternity yields to a spiritual one.

In this way, Sabas's severe ascetic career begins under his father's guidance. Yet, in some way, Sabas is at the same time in competition with him. In fact, the son soon distinguishes himself for the severity with which he exercises bodily restraint, thereby attracting the attention and interest of numerous young followers. It is not exactly clear when the controversy over the group's leadership arose, about which of the two – whether father or son – was to guide the monks. Christopher himself solicits Nikephoros to make this decision for them and in the end the role is assigned to the young Sabas.

The family is reunited when, during a famine that was devastating the population, some relatives (συγγενεῖς) gathered around Kali in order to implore Sabas to leave the city of Collesano. Sabas and his father run to the aid of the Christian community, which was then constituted not only by those who "were near them" (τῶν αὐτοῖς προσόντων) but also by numerous monks. It is in this passage that we learn about the Ismaelites' harassing the Christian community. The hagiographer mentions slavery and death as the two greatest afflictions. In the face of the calamities endured by the Christians in Sicily, the hagiographer emphasizes the role of spiritual guide held by the ascetic and his family. It is clear that Sabas and his family are entrusted with the salvation of the entire Christian community on the island. In fact, the more urgent it became for Sicilian Christians to resist the wave of the Arab invasion, the more the saintly family worked in order to save its members, in the widest meaning of the term: "Then the

most Holy Sabas not only leads his own (οὐ τοῖς οἰκεῖοις μόνον) to salvation but also many others leading them into the mountains and occupying shelters (ἐρύμασι), and having left most of his followers there, he sails across the sea and together with his relatives reaches Calabria.”²⁹

On the other side of the Strait of Messina, in the region of Caronites in Calabria,³⁰ it is still the family network that forms a safety net for the Christian community. Leaving his parents with relatives (συγγενεῖς), Sabas may now continue his journey towards the Merkourion, a border area between Calabria and Lucania that was already dedicated to hermitic life, populated as it was by several Greek monastic communities. In this passage we unexpectedly discover the existence of another significant member of the family: Makarios, a “monk much loved by God” (οὗτος ἦν θεοφιλῆς μοναχός)³¹ who will accompany his older brother in his personal journey as a monastic founder. The ever-growing family – “those who were near to them” (τῶν αὐτοῖς προσόντων) – is finally united in the vicinity of the Temple of the Archangel Michael, the first of the monasteries founded by Sabas and located, according to the monastic tradition, in a clearing purified by fire.

In this location the monk soon acquires fame, especially as a healer. This is shown in an important part of Sabas’s *dossier*, in which his miracles are dedicated to thaumaturgy, a virtue by which the monk was particularly celebrated among the Italo-Greek saints. In this section of the *Vita*, no member of the family is mentioned, probably because we are dealing with a sum of *topoi* that were often adapted to specific cases and places. Instead, the narration is continually interrupted by news regarding the rapid and destabilizing Muslim raids in Calabria. As Germaine Da Costa-Louillet had pointed out, there are six Saracen incursions in Sabas’s *bios*, some of which have been corroborated by comparison with other documents.³²

The death of Sabas’s parents marks another turning point in the saint’s life as a hermit. Since he no longer needs to worry about the monks from the monastery of St Michael that had been entrusted to him by his father (as shall later be clarified in the *Life of Christopher*), Sabas is now in a position to fully satisfy his ascetic inclination and to exercise his role as *higumenos en hesychia*.³³ He fulfils this need by building an oratory in honor of the Apostle Philip in the mountains around Lagonegro.³⁴ This small construction, personally erected by Sabas “with the work of his own hands”, and without the usual guardianship of his father, soon becomes another place from which his sanctity was to radiate. Effectively people begin to flock to the hermit, pleading with him to intercede for them for problems ranging from illness to theft, to demonic possessions. All of these causes are in accordance with the traditional model, to which the *dossier* of miracles closely adheres. Followers came not only from nearby boroughs (Laino, Aeta, Castellio, Sassonio) but also from far-away cities like Taormina and Amalfi.

During this period, Sabas's brother Makarios was always at his side, as the hagiographer incidentally reveals in an episode. A woman possessed by the devil one day entered the sanctuary of the Blessed Philip, "which had been built from the very foundations by Makarios, his favorite brother and who was [really] Blessed".³⁵ Even though Makarios was only mentioned twice in Sabas's *bios*, he appears to have been entrusted with the task of consolidating the sites reached by his older brother. In continuity with his brother's work, Makarios transformed the small oratory constructed by Sabas into a larger church which could house all their faithful followers, not only the monks.

In the remaining part of the text, the members of Sabas's family no longer appear. The narration continues and then concludes with two episodes in which the saint took part as a mediator on behalf of two distinguished prisoners: the son of the Prince of Salerno and the son of the Prince of Amalfi, both hostages of the Emperor Otto II. The *bios* closes with the saint's solemn funeral attended by disciples, monks, magnates with their wives and even the wife of Otto II, the Empress Theophano.

Vocation and cohesion in the *bios* of Christopher and Makarios

Written in the same period and by the same author, the *Life* of Christopher and Makarios is a single text that brings together the biographical events of the father and the virtues of the younger son. It therefore constitutes a unified narrative that seems to support and strengthen the other longer and more complete text. The hagiographer repeats, about Christopher, particular details that can also be found in the *Life* of Sabas, as Germaine Da Costa-Louillet has demonstrated in her study. Indeed she declared that she had come across no contradiction between the two texts but that, on the contrary, "they confirm and complete each other".³⁶ While this remark is undoubtedly true, it is also necessary to note that when the two narratives do differ, however slightly, the alternative or supplementary information tends to confirm the image of a holiness bolstered by a strong family circle.

The initial discrepancy between the two *bioi*, Sabas's and Christopher's, concerns an episode of St Michael appearing to Christopher in a dream. In Sabas's *Life*, St Michael orders Christopher to construct a church, whereas in Christopher's *Life*, the Archangel makes a prediction. The prophecy states that all the members of Christopher's family – including his wife Kali – would become monastics. It is also stated in it that among all the family members the firstborn in particular would shine because of virtue.³⁷ It can be deduced that the vision of the Archangel in Christopher's *Life* thus replaces the initial part of Sabas's *Life*, where the hagiographer attributed the discovery of the boy's holiness to the intuition of his father. In Sabas's *Life*, the father was to choose the road to

ascetic life in order to pave the way for his son; instead, in Christopher's *Life*, the firstborn's holiness is directly attributed to God's will.

Both Sabas's brother Makarios and his mother Kali are part of the *Life* of Christopher right from the beginning and play a role in the search for asceticism leading the family to set up monasteries in the mountains of Northern Calabria. Sabas and Makarios together are also present in the early passages of this text when they turn to their father, who had in the meantime chosen to be a hermit. The two brothers manifest their desire to take the monastic habit to Christopher, and he leads them to a famous hermit called Nikephoros. Even after they have taken vows, Christopher starts out on an extremely severe ascetic path, thereby becoming an example for young men to imitate. He remains a model to imitate also for his children. Finally the Archangel's prophecy is fulfilled when the wife Kali takes vows as well. In doing so, women were offered the possibility of saving themselves at the very moment when Kali's husband was gathering a multitude of persons from the city of Collesano.³⁸

The need to escape from the "hell" spurs Christopher's relatives (συγγενεῖς) to ask permission to escape with him. Here the narratives differ: in Christopher's *bios*, the entire family leaves for Merkourion, while in Sabas's *bios* the family and the whole group of relatives stay behind with kinsmen who offer them hospitality in the region of the Caronites. In addition, the construction of the church in honor of the Archangel Michael is presented in the *bios* of Christopher as an act shared by father and sons, and this is also underlined, in the text, by the constant alternation of singular and plural verbs.³⁹

We can therefore conclude that in the *Life* of Christopher the calling of God, the construction of churches and even the foundation of monastic communities constitute experiences shared by all family members. The family thus becomes a sort of originating nucleus for the experiences of all the Christians. This is also true in the perception of the followers who turn to the family in great numbers to embrace and share the monastic life with them. Moreover, the fact that Christopher and Sabas alternated in guiding the monks – owing to the former's choice to dedicate himself to *hesychia* – means that the two men necessarily lived in the same settlement and that Sabas could not move on until after his father's death. This confirms what had already been narrated in the *Life* of Sabas.

At the end, the *Life* of Makarios refers the funerals of all the family members in chronological order: first Christopher, then Kali, Sabas and finally Makarios. He died ten years after his older brother, after having inherited the role of spiritual guide of all the monasteries.⁴⁰

The hagiographer and the Saint: contacts and similarities

In Italo-Greek hagiography, only rarely is the identity of the hagiographer known. In most cases there is only the name of a monk, often a pupil of

the saint to whom the monastery had given the task of writing the biography of its founder. Our texts, on the contrary, have a clearly identifiable author who is indicated by the inscription on the manuscript and whose authenticity has never been doubted, in spite of many studies throughout the years.⁴¹ A series of cross-references within the texts (especially in the *Life* of Christopher and Makarios) have also confirmed that the two *bioi* are written by the same author. This identity of authorship was already noted in 1875 by Cardinal Jean-Baptiste Pitra, the first major scholar to begin collecting biographical information regarding Orestes. The French scholar hypothesized that the hagiographer had personally witnessed at least some of the facts narrated and must therefore have actually met the saint during his journeys in Southern Italy where he had traveled together with his brother Arsenius.⁴²

A recounting of such a journey might be hidden behind one of the figures in Sabas's *Life*, a monk who had arrived from the East and whom the saint had warmly welcomed, calling him by his name (Niketas). The saint even expressed his desire to go to Rome with Niketas, so that the two men together could visit the Holy Sepulchre of the Apostles Peter and Paul.⁴³ The pilgrimage to the tomb of the Apostles – a *topos* in Italo-Greek hagiography – is evidently a sign of continuity shown in the Christian tradition of the Eastern and Western Churches.⁴⁴ In particular, the use of this *topos* here also emphasizes the significant and on-going relationship between the Greek communities and Rome. The hagiographer speaks through Niketas and has used him knowingly, in order to bring together two monks of completely different origins by uniting them in a highly symbolic experience, showing their common membership in the Christian ecumenical community. As shall be seen, other common elements tie together the real-life experiences of the Oriental Patriarch and the Greco-Sicilian monk. Like Sabas, Orestes also lived in a context that was difficult for Christians and, again like Sabas, Orestes worked at creating a cohesive community for his people in the face of the Arab advance.

Filippo Burgarella's 1997 study has greatly contributed to shedding light on the personality of Patriarch Orestes and on his role as intermediary between the Eastern and Western Churches in the tenth century.⁴⁵ What most clearly emerges from these pages, in which the few existing biographical elements on Orestes have been put together and re-interpreted, is his role as a pastor of the Church, undoubtedly active on a religious, political and diplomatic level. Therefore, given his social background and class, Orestes stands out as an emblematic figure.

It is notable that he came from a Muslim family in which the offspring had decided to convert to Christianity. The two brothers, Orestes and Arsenius, both became Christians and went on to hold high-ranking positions in the ecclesiastical hierarchy. So did their sister Mary, "the most Christian"⁴⁶ mentioned by Rudolph Glaber as the bride of the Egyptian

Sultan Al-Aziz. Orestes lived during the reign of two Egyptian sultans, Al-Aziz and Al-Hakim, whose styles of government were completely different. Unlike Al-Aziz who had adopted a pro-Christian policy to the extent of being considered a crypto-Christian himself, his son Al-Hakim was the champion of an aggressive policy of expropriation and extirpation against the Christians. All sources, even the Islamic ones, agree in defining Al-Hakim as both godless and insane.⁴⁷ Among the most famous examples of his cruel policy is the destruction of the Church of the Holy Sepulchre in Jerusalem. Nevertheless, John of Antioch reports that in the year 999, on behalf of Al-Hakim, Orestes negotiated a ten-year period of peace between the Sultan of Egypt and the Byzantine Empire. His role in the matter unquestionably demonstrates that the Patriarch held an important position at the Fatimid court.⁴⁸

Orestes's pastoral activities and the contributions he made in the controversies between the Eastern and Western Churches are reported in a unique document dated 995: a letter written by Abbot Leo from the Monastery of Saints Boniface and Alexius on the Aventine, a coenobium active as a meeting point of the Oriental Greek and Western Latin traditions in that period.⁴⁹ The letter states that the Egyptian Archbishop Theodore (who may perhaps be identified with Arsenius)⁵⁰ and the Patriarch of Jerusalem Orestes had sent envoys to Rome asking for directives on a number of organizational and liturgical questions relative to the Christian communities in the lands subjected to Arab rule. By reading between the lines of the letter, it is possible to envision the type of challenges that Christian subjects under Fatimid rule had to face. From the letter we can deduce another significant piece of information: the desire of the Oriental pastors to consolidate the community's sense of belonging to a larger *oikoumene* that had always considered the Church of Rome as its highest point of reference.

Lastly, the prosopographical characteristics of Orestes seem to match those of another figure who appears in the *Vita* of Saint Neilos of Rossano (†1004): an archbishop in the service of the Fatimid Khalif, sent as a much trusted diplomat to negotiate the restitution of prisoners. This figure, named Blatton, reaches the coast of Rossano from Africa and, "bringing with him many prisoners that he had ransomed for at that time, he was familiar with the King of the Saracens".⁵¹ Saint Neilos reserves for him very harsh words, because of his familiarity and cordiality with the Saracens, concluding: "Do not strive for peace in Calabria, nor ask for it; this is not at all welcome to the Lord of the Universe."⁵² These words, despite their religious sense, reveal an important aspect of the Christian archbishop's mission, which was to negotiate an armistice between the Fatimids – by now holders of the sovereignty over Sicily – and the Byzantines in Calabria.⁵³ Although the identification of Blatton with Orestes is purely hypothetical, the episode could be taken as another example of the active role that the Patriarch of Jerusalem played in defending the Christians living in territories subject to Arab rule.

Interestingly, the diplomatic missions that Orestes carried out along the coasts of the Mediterranean are well reflected in the image of Sabas who, in the *bios*, often acts as ambassador between the local *archontes* and the Saxon emperors. In particular, Sabas's most arduous diplomatic mission was part of the complex issue of Otto II's Italian expedition between 976 and 983. During this time, the emperor decided to re-affirm Germanic sovereignty over the Byzantine territories of Southern Italy. These were the most difficult years for the Greek population living in those Italian regions, since their fate did not seem to be at all a priority for the political government in Constantinople. By that time, the Byzantine army was heavily engaged on its eastern front and particularly in the Syrian campaigns of Basil II. Concurrently, Arab-Byzantine relations became more onerous owing to the grand project of territorial re-conquest launched by the Byzantine emperor. This project culminated in the strengthening of the Byzantine position in the eastern Mediterranean and in the simultaneous weakening of its hold on the Italian territories.

The ineffectiveness of the Byzantine military forces created a deep sense of desolation in the Apulian populations, because they were unable to defend themselves from the ever-increasing number of Saracen incursions. This dissatisfaction gave the Germanic emperor room to exploit the situation, in order to place himself at the head of the anti-Byzantine revolts. The *bios* of Sabas refers to these events when it highlights the fact that the *patrikios* Romanos, the general (*strategos*) who at that moment held "the regency of Italy and Calabria", entrusted the saint "to set forth and act as legate in order to persuade the king [Otto II] to make an agreement. And he, who never responded to any request with laziness, left for Rome".⁵⁴

Subsequently, the Saxon Emperor again received Sabas as intercessor on behalf of two distinguished prisoners that the emperor himself had taken as hostages in order to enforce the obedience of the princes of Salerno and Amalfi. The Emperor had placed the son of Manson, *patrikios* of Amalfi, and the son of John, the Lombard Prince of Salerno, at the court of Aachen during the years between 980 and 983, in order to dissuade these local leaders from emancipating themselves from the imperial power. The story of their liberation is one of the most beautiful passages of the *bios*, as Jules Gay has rightly pointed out.⁵⁵ This episode was given a large amount of space in the final part of the *bios* and it represents, in a certain sense, its natural conclusion, being interwoven with the death of the saint himself. Having been received by the Empress Theophano governing as her ten-year-old son's regent after her husband's death, Sabas is now depicted as an old man waiting trustingly for the hostages's return before passing away. By closing his work this way, the hagiographer permanently ties the image of the saint with that of an imperial figure, the Empress Theophano, the Porphyrogenita who ruled the Empire in Western Europe and who not only released the prisoners but also took part in the funeral of Sabas, who would die at the Monastery of Saint Caesarius in Rome shortly after.

Conclusions

Orestes's cultural background, experience and knowledge of the Italo-Greek world are the basis of the *bios* of Sabas which, given its ideological framework and historical references, can well and properly be considered a piece of propaganda. By contrast, the *bios* of Christopher and Makarios is a shorter text, largely based on the *topoi* of the hagiographical genre. Nonetheless, this shorter hagiography ideologically completes the former by developing the network of family relationships already present in the *Life* of Sabas, treating his family members as essential pillars for a monastic vocation and for the survival of the Sicilian Christian community in Calabria.

As Filippo Burgarella has observed, the hagiographical interest concerning Orestes "is neither casual nor explicable only in light of the opportunity offered by literary commissions".⁵⁶ On the contrary, the hagiographer's wish to endorse the forms of devotion and the religious experience of the Christians under the Fatimids is apparent. Orestes pursued this objective in both his diplomatic missions and in the literary works which he and his brother Arsenius⁵⁷ addressed to the Graeco-Sicilian Christian community whence these prelates may have originally come.⁵⁸ It is not by chance that Orestes' interest is concentrated on those communities of Christian people that from Sicily, a land now fallen under the sphere of the Fatimids, continued to cross over to Calabria. Indeed, this was a region that was still commonly perceived as a land of the *oikoumene* because it was "governed by Christians".⁵⁹

Orestes's hagiographical works testify that the Christians had in the three ascetics not only a religious model but also a refuge, initially in Southern Calabria under the monks's kinsmen (συγγενεῖς), later in the monasteries of Merkourion and Latinianon. Here they found some monastic communities, which had preserved their Sicilian origin in their name, such as Syracusans or Taorminians, and that would have probably been led by Sabas himself.⁶⁰

In conclusion, the celebratory intent of these *bioi* aims to enhance two generations of monks who strived to perpetuate the idea of a Christianity able to endure the rivalry of a new and victorious monotheistic religion. To glorify family holiness meant encouraging devotion and affiliation not only towards the nuclear family itself, but also towards all the monasteries connected to that family. In other words, the propaganda was directed at glorifying the Christian *genos*, which alone could guarantee – through its own propagation – salvation from the Muslim scourge.

Notes

- 1 Guillou 1963, 79–110; Borsari 1963; Burgarella 1982, 39–53.
- 2 See in particular Pertusi 1965, 382–434; Morini 1977, 354–90.

- 3 See Borsari 1963, 23 ff.; von Falkenhausen 1978, 29–55; von Falkenhausen 1989, 271–306; Caruso 1999, 563–604.
- 4 On the problem of a critical revision of the text, see Caruso 1974, 103–7, discussing the question of the two manuscripts carrying these texts, i.e., *Vat. gr.* 2072, dating from the eleventh and twelfth centuries, and *Vat. gr.* 826, dating from the end of the tenth century or the beginning of the eleventh. The Cozza-Luzi edition of 1893 is solely based on the version found in *Vat. gr.* 2072 and this, without doubt, is one of the reasons why the edition is not completely reliable. Moreover *Vat. gr.* 826, as well as being the oldest version, gives further information. In fact, according to Caruso, “the two manuscripts are independent from each other because each contains a lacuna in the text which is filled by the other” (p. 106).
- 5 The question was already brought up by Patlagean 1992, 193–220, in particular 194, but see the more recent Re 2011, 229.
- 6 On the question of Italo-Greek hagiographers, see Re 2011, 234.
- 7 On the chronological hypothesis of Sabas’s *dies natalis*, see Caruso 1999, 573 n. 39.
- 8 On a basic bibliography see the recent volume edited by Brubaker and Tougher 2013.
- 9 *The Life of Euthymios*, 169, l. 10: Τῷ διὰ τοῦ εὐαγγελίου ἡμᾶς ὠδινήσαντι.
- 10 See Hausherr 1955; Hester 1992, 268 ff.; see also Catto, Gagliardi and Parinello (eds.) 2008.
- 11 See Krausmüller 2013, 355.
- 12 See Alciati and Giorda 2012, 76–82.
- 13 *Life of Theodoros Studites*, col. 234; see Talbot 1990, 119–20; Patlagean 1992, 97.
- 14 *Life of Athanasios*, 4–21; See Thomas 1987, 123.
- 15 See Talbot 1990, 121–2.
- 16 *Life of Euthymios*, 172–4 and 202. See also Talbot 1985, 1–20.
- 17 See Patlagean 1992, 97–103; more recently Kaplan and Kountoura-Galaki 2011, 389–418.
- 18 See Patlagean 1992, 97.
- 19 *Life of Theodora* 1991, 98–9. See Patlagean 1984, 39–67; Talbot 1996, 49–69.
- 20 See Kaplan 2013, 285–301.
- 21 See Efthymiades 2011, 95–142.
- 22 See Morris 1981, 43–51; Patlagean 1992, 97 ff.
- 23 See Angold (ed.) 1984, 112–37; Cheynet 2000, 298 ff.; Kazhdan and Ronchey 1997, 51 ff.
- 24 *Life of Sabas*, 6–7: Γεννήτορες δὲ αὐτῶ τρόποις κοσμώντες χρηστοῖς, καὶ εἰς ἄκρον εὐσεβείας ἐλάσαντες, ὧν τῷ μὲν Χριστοφόρος, τῇ δὲ Καλῇ τοῦνομα.
- 25 *Life of Sabas*, 7.
- 26 *Life of Sabas*, 7: Ὁν [sic] Χριστοφόρος ὁ τοῦτος πατὴρ στεφάνῳ τοσοῦτον κοσμούμενον ἀρετῶν καθορῶν διὰ θαύματος ἤγε, καὶ τῷ θεῷ ἐξ ὅλης ἀνθρωπολογεῖτο ψυχῆς τῷ βλαστὸν τοιοῦτον περικαλλῇ ἐκ τῆς αὐτοῦ ὀσφύος παραγόντι.
- 27 On the monastery of Saint Philip of Agira, near Enna, see Pasini 1981, 13 ff.; von Falkenhausen 1986, 68 ff.; Pirrotta 2008, 41 ff.
- 28 *Life of Sabas*, 9: μαθὼν τὰ κατ’ αὐτὸν ὁ παῖς πάντα καὶ θείῳ πόθῳ τὴν καρδίαν πυρποληθεὶς, πάντων τὰς ψυχὰς νέων θελγεῖν δυναμένων ὑπεριδὼν.
- 29 *Life of Sabas*, 14: τόδε δὴ ὁ πανίερος οὗτος Σάβας οὐ τοῖς οἰκεῖοις μόνον, ἀλλὰ καὶ πολλοῖς ἄλλοις τὴν σωτηρίαν ἐπραγματεύσατο· δι’ ἐρήμων ὁρέων διαβιβάσας αὐτοὺς καὶ καρτεροὺς ἐγκατοικίσας ἐρύμασι, καὶ τὴν πληθὺν ἐκέῖσε καταλειπὼν

- τοῦ λαοῦ, διαποντίῳ πορεία μετὰ τῶν αὐτοῦ γεννητόρων τὴν Καλαβρίαν καταλαμβάνει.
- 30 On the highland of Monte Poro (near Vibo Valentia).
- 31 *Life of Sabas*, 14, par. 7.
- 32 *Life of Sabas*, 12–14, par. 5–6; 17, par. 9; 21, par. 11; 24–5, par. 14; 37–8, par. 22–23; 62, par. 45. See Da Costa-Louillet 1959–60: 1960, 133; see also Vasiliev 1935–50, 303–4.
- 33 See Morini 1977, 380–8.
- 34 *Life of Sabas*, 39–40: χειρῶν αὐτουργία τῶν ἑαυτοῦ.
- 35 *Life of Sabas*, 55: Καταλαβοῦσα δὲ τὸν πάνσεπτον ναὸν τοῦ πνεύματος διώκτου Φιλίππου, ὃν ἐδήματο ἐκ βάθρων Μακάριος ὁ τούτου ἀδελφὸς ὁ θεοφιλῆς καὶ ὄντος Μακάριος. The hagiographer plays on the meaning of the name Makarios, also an adjective that in Greek means “blessed.”
- 36 Da Costa-Louillet 1960, 140.
- 37 *Life of Christopher*, 73–4.
- 38 *Life of Christopher*, 80.
- 39 *Life of Christopher*, 83.
- 40 *Life of Christopher*, 95.
- 41 Fol. 56v, codex *Vat. gr.* 2072 reads: Ὁρέστου πατριάρχου Ἱεροσολύμων βίος ἐν ἐπιτομῇ τῶν ὁσίων πατέρων ἡμῶν Χριστοφόρου καὶ Μακαρίου (“Life of Orestes Patriarch of Jerusalem epitome of our Holy Fathers Christopher and Makarios”). This annotation is completed with the hagiographer’s beginning in the *Life of Christopher*, 92: ὁ δὲ βίος αὐτοῦ καὶ τὰ σημεῖα καὶ θαύματα ἐν ἐτέρᾳ πραγματείᾳ ἐφράφη κατὰ τὸ ἐγγωροῦν ἡμῖν (“The life of the same [i.e., Sabas] and his actions and his miracles I wrote about as much as possible in another work”).
- 42 See Pitra 1876, 310.
- 43 *Life of Sabas*, 30–1.
- 44 See Russo 1968, 89–99; Sansterre 1985, 530–2 and 541–2; Sansterre 1988, 713–16.
- 45 Burgarella 1997, 201 ff.
- 46 According to Rudolph Glaber, see Cavallo and Orlandi (eds.) 2011, 157.
- 47 See Walker 2015; Canard 2015.
- 48 *Yahya of Antioch*, 415. It was not Orestes who was to suffer the grueling atrocities that Al-Hakim inflicted on the Patriarch of Jerusalem and that, narrated in the West, were understood as describing the martyrdom of Orestes himself (see *Yahya of Antioch*, 461). Instead, it was his brother Arsenius, Melkite Patriarch of Alexandria and regent at the time of Al-Hakim’s destruction of Jerusalem in 1010. Orestes had, in fact, by then already died at Jerusalem in 1005. See von Falkenhausen 1989, 295.
- 49 See Burgarella 1997, 194–5. On the monastery of Saints Boniface and Alexius, see Hamilton 1965, 263–310.
- 50 See Burgarella 1997, 202.
- 51 *Life of Neilos*, 108: μετὰ τῶν πολλῶν αἰχμαλώτων, διὰ τὸ προσκεῖσθαι αὐτῷ ἕως καιροῦ τὸν τῶν Σαρακινῶν βασιλέα.
- 52 *Life of Neilos*, 109: Καὶ περὶ τῆς εἰρήνης τῆς Καλαβρίας μὴ κοπιῶ, μηδὲ ἀξίου, οὐ γὰρ εὐδοκεῖ ὁ τῶν ὅλων Δεσπότης ἐν τούτῳ.
- 53 *The strategos of the thema*, representing the highest imperial authority in the province, probably resided in Rossano at the time. This explains why Blatton landed on the Rossano coast, see Burgarella 1989, 466.
- 54 *Life of Sabas*, 37: πατρικίος, Ἰταλίαν διέπειν ἐπετράπη καὶ Καλαβρίαν [...] Ἐδεῖτο τοιγαροῦν τοῦ θαυμασίου τούτου πατρὸς ἀπελθεῖν καὶ διαπρεβεύσασθαι καὶ πρὸς ὁμόνοιαν ἐλκύσαι τὸν ῥήγα, καὶ ὃς μὴδὲν ἐπιδαξάμενος νωχελὲς ἐπὶ τὴν

- ῥώμην ἀπήει. This confirms the Saint Gall Chronicle, 80, which referred that the moment the *basileus* learned about the military plans of Otto II, he sent an embassy to dissuade him: the envoy could have been the monk Sabas.
- 55 See Gay 1917, 355–6.
- 56 Burgarella 1997, 204.
- 57 Arsenius is the author of a hymn in honor of Saint Philip, eponymous of the monastery of Agira: see Pitra 1876, 319; see also Odorico 1988, 5.
- 58 Burgarella 1997, 203.
- 59 These are the words used by the emperor Constantine VII Porphyrogenetos about Calabria, *De thematibus*, 96. See Caruso 1999, 566.
- 60 Concerning the monastery of the Syracusans (τῶν Συρακουσίων), often mentioned in *Life of Sabas* (28–9) and in *Life of Elias the Speleot*, 885, par. 94, and concerning the monastery of the Taorminians (τῶν Ταυρομεντιῶν), mentioned in *Life of Sabas*, 45–6, see Caruso 1999, 577–8.

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6 Historical echoes in Italo-Greek hagiographies of the Norman age*

Gioacchino Strano

When the Normans took possession of Southern Italy and Sicily,¹ they behaved with foresight and openness. Although they supported the introduction into Sicily, as in Calabria and Terra d'Otranto, of the ethnic 'Latin' element (Lombards and Normans) and despite the appointment of bishops loyal to the pope of Rome and the foundation of Latin monasteries (in Calabria, for example, the *Santissima Trinità* of Mileto, *S. Maria di S. Eufemia*, *S. Maria della Matina*),² they did not withdraw their support for the Byzantine component,³ which continued to receive protection,⁴ and which would provide the future kingdom officials and bureaucrats.⁵ Thus, under the Normans there was a flowering of Greek monasteries⁶ (above all, Rossano's Patir, St Savior *de lingua Phari*), which preserved their rites and their language and that for a long time constituted centers of culture, as proved by their libraries, rich with Greek (especially liturgical or patristic) texts.⁷

An important sign of Byzantine culture and religion between Calabria and Sicily is the hagiographical production, which, after the great flowering of the past, was not hindered by the new rulers. In fact, we find in the Norman period some important examples of Italo-Greek hagiographic texts that reveal, on the one hand, the persistence of Byzantine culture in the ancient Italian provinces of the empire, and, on the other, the inevitable changes in the climate of cultural history, as well as the emergence of new problems between Greek and Latin ethnic components.

The *Vitae* composed between the tenth and eleventh centuries arose in order to celebrate holy Siculo-Calabrian monks,⁸ whose experience of life and holiness was divided between hermitage and monastery, between wandering⁹ and staying in existing monasteries or in new ones, founded by the very saints praised in the hagiographical works.¹⁰ The historical context which underlies these texts is usually well defined,¹¹ as they offer a framework, often vivid and impressive, of life in the Byzantine regions of Southern Italy, constantly threatened and made insecure by enemy attacks, especially by the Arabs, whose gradual conquest of Sicily drove many monks to leave the island and to journey towards Calabria or other regions of the Byzantine Empire.¹² The Italo-Greek hagiography

of the Norman age has fewer witnesses, though they are of great historical and documentary value and of not little interest from the point of view of their literature. Such is the *Life* of St Luke, Bishop of Isola Capo Rizzuto;¹³ that of St Bartholomew of Simeri,¹⁴ to whom we owe the foundation (or the re-establishment) of Rossano's Patir and St Savior *de Lingua Phari* at Messina;¹⁵ and – as a last significant example – the *Life* of St Cyprian, who lived in the Norman age and died in the monastery of Calamizzi (near Reggio Calabria) around 1210–15.¹⁶

We will start by examining the *bios* of St Luke, bishop of Isola. As rightly pointed out by Augusta Acconcia Longo, the work is both the first and last biography of a bishop written in Greek since the gradual romanization of the Italo-Greek dioceses began.¹⁷ St Luke was a native of Melicuccà, ἐν τῇ χώρᾳ Σαλινῶν, ἐν τῇ Καλαβρίτιδι γαίᾳ,¹⁸ then in the region of the two Eliases (the Younger, or from Enna,¹⁹ founder of the monastery of Salinae, and the Speleot),²⁰ Nicodemus²¹ and Philaretos.²² Luke became bishop of Isola (now Isola Capo Rizzuto, near Crotone).²³ His *Life* was probably written by an anonymous author shortly after the saint's death in 1114, presumably between 1116 and 1120.²⁴

Luke's father's name was Ursinus and his mother's Maria.²⁵ The father's name suggests perhaps a remote Lombard origin. His role as bishop led him to preach to the people and to the monks:

To everyone, but especially to those who lived in the monastic order, he addressed these exhortations: "Do not eat before the time fixed or until you have had your fill, but dominate yourself even if the stomach asks, hate idleness as the cause of many evils and always obtain a job." These things he taught and inculcated into all the people. In fact, you had to see him: he went around anytime, anywhere; taught in the cities, towns and churches of the saints; and especially on their feasts he rose to preach and explain in a penetrating way the wonders that the Lord of victories worked through them.²⁶

It is said that Luke also preached in Sicily²⁷ and stopped in its towns in order to ordain priests:

But he did not leave Sicily either out of his apostolate. In fact, he did not hesitate to cross the sea, start his journey and go through the land that was treacherous because of godless enemies who lived there (γῆν ἄλαλον κατὰ τοὺς ἐνυπάρχοντας ἐν αὐτῇ ἀθεοὺς ἐχθρούς) [. . .] but crossed the whole (island) preaching the saving word of God, and stopping in its cities in order to ordain priests.²⁸

The hagiographer defines the island as a 'land that was treacherous because of godless enemies who lived there' and with these words he was probably referring to the Arabs, who had to be converted to Christianity.²⁹

We know that Luke drew up in Sicily three Greek testaments for Gregory, Abbot of St Philip of Fragalà: the first in 1096–1097, and the other two in May 1105,³⁰ signed by him as bishop: ἐπίσκοπος Σύλ(ων)³¹ or ἐπίσκοπος Ἀσύλων.³² This lapse of time allows us to make two assumptions: either Luke lived for such a long period in Sicily, or, more likely, he went there on several occasions in order to contribute to the reorganization of monasticism and, more generally, of the Greek Church on the island³³ after the *Arabocratia*. The testaments of the καθηγούμενος Gregory attest, in fact, to the plight of the Christians of Sicily and the sufferings that the abbot had to bear from the ‘atheist Saracens’;³⁴ the use of this phrase in a testament drawn up by Bishop Luke seems to prove that the ‘godless enemies’ of this *bios* were the Muslims still present on the island. By participating in the reorganization of the Greek Church our saint showed his cultural skills, which he used both in the writing of testaments, and in the activity of preaching and in the ordination of new priests. Such an activity earned him the nickname *grammatikos* with which he is qualified also in the commemoration’s note in codex *Messan. gr.* 103, fol. 65r, for December 10.³⁵

Once returned to his diocese, he decided to go to the ‘Capital’: interestingly, for southern Italian Byzantines, Βασιλεύουσα was, *par excellence*, Constantinople. However, he could not make this journey. The text does not clearly explain the reasons for this waiver; it simply states that the saint

arrived in Taranto, found that the One who knows everything before birth did not agree with this plan; and then proceeded to go back, though unwillingly, to the land of Calabria where he had started from.³⁶

We cannot say with certainty what held back Luke. Behind the reluctance of the hagiographer there were probably religious and, broadly speaking, political reasons: perhaps the saint did not have the support of the Norman authorities, whose hostility to Byzantium discouraged such interaction between Greek citizens and Byzantium.³⁷ This failed journey contrasts with what would happen to St Bartholomew of Simeri who, as we shall see, went on a mission to Constantinople to the Komnenian sovereigns. Furthermore, we do not know whether the bishop of Isola had been asked an act of formal submission to Rome, but certainly the relationship with the Latin Church may not have been entirely peaceful. Such troubled interaction seems to be proved by the anti-Latin polemical words contained in the *bios*, especially on the use of unleavened bread, and on the administration of baptism on any day, topics upon which Byzantine polemical writings between the eleventh and twelfth century had insisted.³⁸ The biographer writes:

But you, o Latins, who interpret the scriptures in the way of Pharisees, administer unleavened bread, in the manner of the Jews; you also

give baptism every day; and not thinking properly fall into countless heresies. With these words he let them be inflamed by anger.³⁹

The Latins were so angry with him, that they built a hut and forced him to enter it in order that he should be burned alive.⁴⁰ The saint asked to make

the bloodless sacrifice. He took permission and with a child entered the hut and laid the preparations for the mass, then began to celebrate. Before he finished with the holy function, they kindled the fire from the outside of the hut on four sides. And the fire, devouring all the leaves, did not touch a hair of the saint. He appeared in the sacred vestments in the middle of the hut praying with the child, safe and unharmed. And he threw the wicked in dismay and fear, and caused the believers to raise glory to God.⁴¹

We do not know if the saint had really agreed of his own will to enter the hut, accompanied by a child, exposing himself and the child to the risk of being burned. Certainly, about that time there were in Calabria obvious tensions with the Latin elements (and thus with the Church of Rome) and there were signs that the Greek community felt threatened by the arrogance of the Latins and felt the risk of a progressive (even though slow) assimilation. The *bios* could then testify, albeit in an indirect way, to the resistance of a Greek bishop to the progressive Latinization of the Greek episcopal sees in Southern Italy,⁴² a resistance that did not rule out – as we will see in a clearer way in the case of Bartholomew of Simeri – the acceptance of a concrete protection by the new rulers. Luke, indeed, received a privilege from the Great Count Roger in 1092, with the granting of property rights,⁴³ and the monastery of St Nicholas of Vioterito, which he founded with the adjoining church,⁴⁴ was the recipient (and beneficiary) of a diploma of donation from Countess Adelasia and her son Roger in 1110–11.⁴⁵

Luke's *Life* tells us, however, that among the *post-mortem* miracles of the holy man one involved a 'Frank' (i.e., a Norman), named Revetos, a native of the city of Briatico:

The Holy Man, even when he was alive, had warned him not to treat insolently the priests of God nor to refer them to the yoke of heavy taxes. But he did not tolerate at all his sayings. But a disease struck him in such a manner as to endanger his life also. He then remembered the warnings of the Holy Man [. . .] he decided to go to the tomb of the Saint himself to exculpate himself by oath and declare that henceforth the priests would not be bothered or harassed by any kind of oppression.⁴⁶

The saint healed him, but as the man continued to harass the priests, a worse evil caught him. Thus, the story tells us that the Greek clergy suffered (at least occasionally) pressures and threats from the newcomers, obviously interested in getting their hands on their property.⁴⁷

However, one should not believe that the relationship between Greek clergy and Latin new authorities was increasingly affected by suspicion and (mutual) dislike, as attested, for example, by the case of Bishop Luke of Bova, author of three pastoral letters, of a theological and disciplinary speech and a spiritual testament.⁴⁸ Luke was administrator of the metropolis of Reggio,⁴⁹ as well as bishop of Bova (1095–1140),⁵⁰ and preached in Calabria and Sicily, as his namesake and contemporary Bishop Luke of Isola Capo Rizzuto. In his honor a short liturgical hymn was written, a *syntomon*, preserved in cod. *Crypt.* E. Y. I, dated 1345.⁵¹ It was once thought that the two bishops were in fact the same person,⁵² but this identification is now definitively set aside on account of several reasons fully explained by Augusta Aconcia Longo in a detailed analysis.⁵³ In any case, it should be pointed out that the bishop of Bova had good relations with the Latin authorities, so as to give thanks for his appointment as a bishop to two figures, Rao and Roger, certainly Normans, to be identified, as proposed by von Falkenhausen, with the bishops of Reggio Rudolf (1095) and Roger (1099–1116).⁵⁴ This context tells us once again that, even amid the tensions and contrasts, the coexistence of the Greek clergy with Latin hierarchies was possible and, in any case, necessary.

More interesting is the *Life* of St Bartholomew, born of a distinguished family in the Calabrian village of Simeri (near Catanzaro). The *Life* of Bartholomew was composed around the middle of the twelfth century: the *terminus ante quem* might be, as Stefano Caruso points out, 1149,⁵⁵ since Luke, the first successor of Bartholomew, is mentioned in the *bios* as still living.⁵⁶ The identification of the author with Philagathos of Cerami, who wrote a sermon in memory of the saint, is not certain:⁵⁷ the sermon possibly served as a model for the (certainly later) life, which, at present, we must resign ourselves to considering anonymous.⁵⁸ The *dossier* on the holy monk of Simeri also includes three (anonymous) canons:⁵⁹ the first of them refers to the successor of Bartholomew in the Patir who, although not explicitly named, can be identified with his disciple Luke. For him and for the flock of monks, the anonymous author implores the protection of the saint: Ὁν λελουτας διάδοχον σῆς ἀρχῆς, / φοιτητὴν σου γενόμενον γνήσιον / καὶ μιμητὴν [...] ἀνώτερον τήρει παντὸς κακοῦ / σὺν πάσῃ τῇ σῇ ποιμνῇ.⁶⁰ So the hymn too, like the *bios*, was composed before 1149. The parallels and similarities in both language and content between the two texts are evident, and suggest that both were written in the monastic compass of Rossano, as they reflect the same environment and the same atmosphere.⁶¹ Similar considerations may be expressed about the second hymn, namely that it was probably composed when the successor of Bartholomew, Luke, was still living (see vv. 193–194), but after the creation

of the archimandritate (1131), as evinced from vv. 147–148 ἡ μάνδρα σου ἡ πασῶν ἄρχουσα.⁶² The editor of these texts, Proiou, did not express herself clearly about the authorship of the canons and the *bios*: accordingly, we can only say that these, as well as the praise of Philagathos, are the result of the desire to exalt the memory of Bartholomew in the Calabrian context of the Patir.

The *bios* tells us that the saint felt growing in himself the monastic vocation, left his father's house and went to an ascetic named Cyril, where he took the monastic habit, changing his name from Basil to Bartholomew.⁶³ He then decided to live as a hermit in a narrow cave,⁶⁴ in a mountainous and rugged location. And yet even there, according to a widespread hagiographical *topos*, he was discovered by hunters;⁶⁵ after that, many of the faithful rushed to him, eager to share his lifestyle. Bartholomew gathered them in an old *asketerion*, founded years before by a monk, Niphon, near Rossano, 'dedicated to the name of the Virgin Mary and John the Baptist of Ronconiate.'⁶⁶ This was the nucleus of a new monastery dedicated to the Hodigitria, and afterwards named Patir.

The saint enjoyed the favor of powerful protectors: Admiral Christodoulos,⁶⁷ minister of the grancomital court, perhaps of Arabic origin, and Roger II, who would become king at Christmas 1130, just after the death of Bartholomew, which occurred on 19 August of the same year in Rossano.⁶⁸ Christodoulos played a key role as intermediary between Bartholomew and the Norman court, so that the hagiographer's statement that defines the admiral "a man who was then powerful before the land's sovereigns" seems entirely legitimate.⁶⁹ We may think that the expression ἐπιγείῳ βασιλεῦσι was here generically referring to the Norman king (though he is constantly called ῥήξ by the hagiographer), but perhaps also to the emperors of Constantinople⁷⁰ (at the time, Alexios and Irene), to whom the devotion of the Byzantines of Italy persisted; indeed, the saint went (or was he sent?) to the court at Constantinople, maybe during a diplomatic mission on behalf of the grancomital court.⁷¹ Moreover, Christodoulos received from Byzantium the office of *proto-nobelissimos*,⁷² a recognition of his official role at the Byzantine court. The biographer adds that Christodoulos was tied to the saint and depended on his will and on his orders, 'as can be known, for those who want it, from letters sent to him by this glorious father'.⁷³

After the founding of the monastery and his ordination to the priesthood by Bishop Polychronius, owner of Ginecopolis or Genecocastro,⁷⁴ the *Life* says that 'it was necessary for this holy father to travel to ancient Rome, to procure through the bull of the Pope, who was Paschal, the necessary independence for the monastery'.⁷⁵ The biographer adds no other details, but the veracity of the episode is confirmed by the subscription to manuscript *Vat. gr.* 2050, at f. 117r, which tells us that in the year 1105 Paschal II granted to the monastery of Bartholomew the σιγγύλιον ἐλευθερίας, by which it was placed under the papal jurisdiction.⁷⁶ Thus

ended the harassment of the archbishop of Rossano, Nicholas Maleinos, who wanted to impose on the monastery his authority and that of his family:

ἔκτοτε δὲ εὗρεν ἀνάπαυσιν ἡ ἁγία μονὴ λυτρωθεῖσα ἐκ χειρῶν Μαλαυνῶν. Πάνυ γὰρ ἐπολιόρκει αὐτὴν Νικόλαος ὁ Μαλαυνός, καὶ ἀρχιεπίσκοπος μετὰ τῆς γενεᾶς αὐτοῦ.⁷⁷

This information has been variously interpreted: some scholars have seen in it the evidence that Byzantine monasticism returned to Latin obedience, after belonging for more than three centuries to the Constantinopolitan patriarchal jurisdiction;⁷⁸ more likely, however, Bartholomew acted in accordance with established practices of Byzantine monasticism: as pointed out by Vera von Falkenhausen, he ‘simply employed the ancient and well-established custom current in Byzantine monasticism, by which interference from a local authority and the local clergy was bypassed through the appeal to a higher, but more distant, power.’⁷⁹

An important episode narrated in the *Life* is the journey of Bartholomew to Constantinople (the βασιλὶς τῶν πόλεων), in order to provide his monastery with sacred books and ornaments and venerable pictures.⁸⁰ The saint was received with full honors by Alexios I Komnenos, his wife Irene and all the senate,⁸¹ and was honored ‘with venerated icons and books and sacred vessels’.⁸² The *Life* tells us that the saint in Constantinople gained the favor not only of the sovereigns, but also of a great officer, Basil Kalimeris. The holy man was entrusted by him with a monastery on Mount Athos, dedicated to St Basil.⁸³ Bartholomew agreed and

became the author of many benefits to the ascetics of the monastery, directing them towards the best with words and deeds.⁸⁴

When he left the monastery on Athos, Bartholomew put it under the guidance of a monk whom he considered more suitable for the position; however, the Athos monastery was bound for a long time to the saint in Calabria and was therefore known as the monastery τοῦ Καλαβροῦ.⁸⁵

According to the references in the *bios*, the journey to Constantinople followed the recognition of the independent status of the monastery by Pope Paschal II in 1105, and took place after the miracle of the release of a boat of the monastery, captured by Agarens on ‘the seventh and final day of the week, the twenty-third of July, Day of Saint Apollinaris’.⁸⁶ According to the chronology of the reign of Alexios, the episode of the boat should have happened in 1110;⁸⁷ if so, the journey to Constantinople of Bartholomew should be placed at a later date, still, of course, *before* 1118, the year of the death of Alexios. Gastone Breccia questioned such chronology with a number of critical remarks, on account of which he put forward several hypotheses about dating.⁸⁸ Breccia believed that

the trip occurred before the granting of the *privilegium libertatis*, since its aim would be to provide the Rossano monastery with manuscripts and sacred vessels. Mario Re objected to this hypothesis⁸⁹ and deemed unnecessary to change the traditional chronology: in fact, the monastery surely was not lacking manuscripts, since the *scriptorium* worked well before 1105. As Re notes, already in June 1102 the monastery was able to produce and complete MS *Vat. gr.* 2000, with funds from Bartholomew himself, who is named as hieromonk in the colophon.⁹⁰

Breccia returned to this problem⁹¹ and suggested that the journey of Bartholomew could have occurred between 1106 and 1107, while Bohemond, returned from Antioch, was preparing his expedition against the Byzantine Empire. According to this scholar, Bartholomew carried out a diplomatic mission⁹² by which he complied with the trend of the government of Christodoulos and the regent Adelasia del Vasto, in favor of an agreement between the county and the Empire.⁹³ While in Constantinople, the saint might have received from Alexios the icon of Hodigitria, in memory of that preserved in the church of the monastery τῶν Ὁδηγῶν in Constantinople, which the imperial family revered with a particular devotion.⁹⁴ This dating for Bartholomew's journey takes into account a few certain data, namely the fact that in 1109 Christodoulos received from Byzantium the title of *protonobelissimos*⁹⁵ for his role during the expedition of Bohemond; and that in 1111 he donated the farmhouse of St Apollinaris to the monastery, already known as *Nea Hodigitria*.⁹⁶

This likely reconstruction could be supplemented with a hypothesis proposed by Burgarella.⁹⁷ His suggestion focuses on the figure of the benefactor, Basil, who, according to the *bios*, donated to Bartholomew the Athonite monastery dedicated to St Basil and known as τοῦ Καλαβροῦ. Burgarella identifies this Basil with the eunuch of the same name, who would have subscribed (with Constantine) the Treaty of Devol, signed in September 1108 between Alexios I and Bohemond.⁹⁸ Now, both Basil and Constantine were *apocrisarii* of Richard Senescalco, son of Drogo of Hauteville, brother of Guiscard, and of a sister of Sichelgaita – the second wife of Guiscard. A Basil (probably the same person), imperial *protonobelissimos*, was underwriter of a diploma of Richard Senescalco in 1108.⁹⁹ This Richard in 1111 ratified, along with William, duke of Apulia, and Adelasia, countess of Calabria and Sicily, the sale of the farmhouse of St Apollinaris at the river Coscile from Folco of Basulcherio to Christodoulos, who in turn would give it to the Patir monastery.¹⁰⁰ The Basil mentioned in the *Life*, if he is to be identified with the eunuch Basil so closely bound to the events of the Normans of Southern Italy, could have been Italo-Greek in origin, as his surname, Kalimeris, would seem to confirm, for it is also attested in the South of the Italian Peninsula.¹⁰¹ Thus, the story of Bartholomew would be connected with the relations between the Norman county and Byzantium at the time of the expedition of Bohemond; it should also not be neglected that meanwhile the

issue of negotiations between the Roman Church and the Greek Church under Pope Paschal II was under way.¹⁰² Pope Paschal, before 15 November 1112, received an imperial envoy, a certain B. Mesimeri, and then sent a legation in Constantinople at the head of which was the bishop of Amalfi Maurus.¹⁰³ This Mesimeri could possibly be the same Calimeris of the *Life* of Bartholomew.¹⁰⁴ In such circumstances, the journey of Bartholomew in Constantinople would have run in a time span ranging from 1106–1107 to 1109–1110.

Furthermore, the permanence of Bartholomew on Athos and his moralizing activity is important, because it took place when well-known problems and scandals plagued the Holy Mountain, causing the intervention of the Patriarch of Constantinople Nicholas III Grammatikos. The Patriarch decreed the expulsion of Vlach shepherds from Mount Athos, since they had introduced women, eunuchs and children, with serious harm to the proper conduct of the monks.¹⁰⁵ Moreover, many of these were devoted to wandering and laxity, while heresies and schisms proliferated in the monasteries, a fact that Nicholas did not hesitate to stigmatize,¹⁰⁶ in order to improve the morality on Athos and, more generally, in the Byzantine Church.

An echo of this controversial situation seems to resonate even in the *Life* of Bartholomew of Simeri, in the episode of a trial brought against him by two envious monks.¹⁰⁷ It is, as has long been established, a dispute internal to Byzantine monasticism, as the monks of St Angelo of Militinus¹⁰⁸ were definitely Greek. They brought against Bartholomew charges of embezzlement, nepotism, debauchery and an even more serious sin, heresy; then they dragged him into the presence of King Roger and the court in the city of Messina in order to put him on trial.¹⁰⁹ The saint did not contest the charges and was therefore condemned to the stake. He expressed only one request: to celebrate the Divine Liturgy before order was executed. During the celebration,

as the mystical body was lifted up, as soon as the king entered the temple to see it, he found – he and many magnates – behind the saint a pillar of fire that rose from the feet up to the sky and angels who ministered to him.¹¹⁰

The king and all the barons then became aware of the groundlessness of the accusations and asked for the pardon of the saint, who not only granted it, but even interceded for the slanderers who risked ending up at the stake in his place. The king, to honor Bartholomew, arranged that, in the same place where the pyre was lit, there would be a new monastery, the Holy Saviour *de lingua Phari*, where the successor of Bartholomew, the hieromonk Luke, became hegoumenos.¹¹¹

In this episode, as in the earlier story of the miracle of the loaves for the consecration of the Eucharist,¹¹² one can find an echo of the controversy

between the Greek and the Latin Churches about the use of unleavened bread, a theme explicitly present, as we have seen, in the *bios* of St Luke. In particular, the fact that at the moment of Elevation of the Mystical Body Bartholomew appears next to a column of fire among the angels is, according to Burgarella, “not only the proof of the celebrant’s innocence, but also the attestation of the sacred value of the ritual, of the holiness attained by the eucharist he consecrated, and of the superior status of Greek Liturgy. The implied message is about the value of the ritual act of Elevation celebrated according to the Greek rite.”¹¹³ The two episodes that concern the Saints Luke and Bartholomew attest that the tool and ‘weapon’ of their salvation is the celebration of a ‘bloodless sacrifice’, of course according to the Greek rite that used leavened bread.

With regard to the trial of Bartholomew we need to highlight another aspect: namely the centrality of the role of the sovereign, involved to resolve conflicts in the Church and to fight the heretics. Roger II presides over the process, but, in hindsight, he plays a role that had already been covered by Alexios, who fought heresy and presided over the trials against Leo of Chalcedon, John Italos and Basil the Bogomil.¹¹⁴ The consonance between the fate of the Bogomil, who is condemned to the stake, and what Bartholomew was supposed to undergo, shows this trial almost like a ‘mirror image’: Bartholomew is not subject to the stake because, obviously, he plays a positive role. But the role played by Roger is similar to that of the Orthodox counterpart, the pious Alexios who defends the integrity of the Church from all internal and external enemies, protecting the holy monks¹¹⁵ and fighting against various heresies.

One may also point out some similarities between the *bios* of Bartholomew and that of St Cyril Philotheos.¹¹⁶ Cyril in the East, like Bartholomew in the West, enjoys the favor of aristocrats and of the ruling family. Bartholomew becomes known to Roger through Christodoulos; Cyril, before being visited by Alexios and his whole family, meets some powerful aristocrats close to the emperor. Bartholomew, according to a progression rising towards a climax, is received in Constantinople by Alexios and Irene, as well as by all the Senate. When he leaves, he gives a series of recommendations:

The father, then, as he thought of his return, first counseled many things to the emperors and those who were in power with regard to justice and clemency towards their subjects and good giving, and about taking no account of the arrogance of imperial power and the glory arising from it, but choosing, with all the strength, the goods of heaven and earning the celestial kingdom by benevolence and kindness towards their subjects.¹¹⁷

This short paraenetical insert finds a parallel in the words addressed to Alexios by Cyril in a long passage that can be defined, according to the

criteria set out by Prinzing, an 'integrated *Fürstenspiegel*'.¹¹⁸ The Monk insists on the virtues that the sovereign must have, *in primis* over the domain of the passions:

Emperor is someone who is master of anger, jealousy and pleasure, who directs everything according to the laws of God, who keeps his intelligence free and does not let his mind be dominated by the bondage of pleasure.¹¹⁹

Such themes are absolutely frequent in paraenetical texts, already in ancient and late antique periods; the fact that they occur in the hagiographies of the Komnenian (and Norman) age is a sign of the presence of a *topos* peculiar to the age in question, both in the East and in the West.

Such overview shows a context in which Byzantium lost direct control of the Italian provinces, but did not yet lose its leadership in culture and, above all, continued to provide models and ideological, political and social patterns for the Italo-Greek component: Bartholomew and the anonymous hagiographer appear tenaciously bound to the empire, though being loyal to the new Norman reality.¹²⁰

The last *bios* that concludes the series of Greek hagiographies of the Norman age is the *Life* of St Cyprian,¹²¹ a native of Reggio.¹²² The chronological references are easily obtained from the text: Cyprian was appointed hegumen of the monastery of St Nicholas of Calamizzi by the will of the monks and the bishop of Reggio, Thomas. At the death of the saint, the monks buried his body in the church of the monastery, with the consent of Bishop Giraldus, a successor of Thomas. Thomas is attested in the list of bishops of Reggio between 1179 and 1182; Giraldus between 1210 and 1216.¹²³ This time span enabled Stiernon¹²⁴ to fix the death of Cyprian around 1210–15. The composition of the text is to be placed a little later, at about the middle of the thirteenth century.

The healing powers of Cyprian would be manifested both on the spiritual plane of the miracle, and on that of medical science, in which the saint excelled,¹²⁵ according to his family tradition. We read:

that our Holy Father Cyprian was of the great city of Reggio Calabria. Born of noble and wealthy parents, still a child he was given to various teachers and carefully educated in the Scriptures: so by his father who was a doctor, but especially by the grace of the Holy Spirit, he learned and became an expert in medical science.¹²⁶

And further:

his fame spread everywhere, in Sicily and in Calabria, where crowds of men and women, rich and poor, sick and suffering from physical and even spiritual ailments came to him to ask for healing. And he

expertly and with knowledge (τέχνη καὶ ἐπιστήμη), but especially with the grace of the Holy Spirit, dismissed the sick in the body healed and happy, while the suffering in spirit, after healing them with encouragement, advice, exhortations and spiritual remedies, he dismissed them grateful to God.¹²⁷

I will not go into the topic of medical studies at Reggio,¹²⁸ but it is worth recalling the figure of Constantine, a native of the city on the Strait, in the eleventh century, and destined for a brilliant career at the court of Constantinople as *protasecretis*.¹²⁹ He is known for the translation of a famous Arabic medical textbook, *K. zād al-musāfir wa-qūt al-ḥāḍir* of al-Jazzār,¹³⁰ entitled in Greek *Ephodia*, a work which circulated in Southern Italy, as proved by the fact that a copy of it belonged to a doctor of Reggio in the twelfth century, Philip Xeros.¹³¹

To sum up, hagiography gives us, directly and indirectly, important evidence on the religiosity of Calabria, but also evidence about the culture of its inhabitants and the conditions of life in a region, that, even when it stopped being part of the Eastern Roman empire, did not lose its deeply Byzantine traits. With regard to the public to whom these three *bioi* were addressed and, simultaneously, to the purposes underlying them, we can certainly say that such works were meant to enhance the monasteries in which the saints had exercised their earthly mission and where their relics were kept. This purpose certainly applies to the *Life* of Bartholomew of Simeri, an expression – together with the canons dedicated to him – of the environment of the Patir. A similar consideration can be made for the *bios* of St Cyprian, whose recipients and users were certainly the monks and the devotees of the monastery of St Nicholas of Calamizzi: the hagiographer pointed out, among other things, the efforts of the saint to restructure the church and all the buildings that belonged to the monastery, to the defense of which the saint would devote himself against those who sought to damage it.¹³² A monastic context for both the source and the public can be assumed also for the *Life* of Saint Luke bishop of Isola: although he is a member of the church hierarchy, in the work dedicated to him the exaltation of the monastic virtues and the memory of his miracles are prevalent, especially those *post-mortem* around the tomb of the saint, preserved in the monastery of Vioterito. Moreover, the hagiographer would have learned of the miracle of the rod of fire that fell from heaven and that appeared ‘on the door of the church where his sacred body lays’ just by the ‘venerable fathers, witnesses worthy of faith’,¹³³ while of other miracles he himself would have been a direct witness already ‘at the same hour in which his venerable body was buried’.¹³⁴

This monastic world, of Greek culture and religious devotion, appears rich and varied, even if the risk of assimilation and absorption by the now prevailing Latin element became all the more urgent and inevitable. Suffice it to say that the referents of these saints are the Pope of Rome

(for Bartholomew of Simeri, who also looks towards Constantinople), the Norman authorities (who grant to all privileges and donations), and the new Latin ecclesiastical hierarchies. The fate of Cyprian, not surprisingly, was conditioned by the will of the bishops (now Latin) of Reggio: Thomas prompted him to become hegumen of St Nicholas, while Giraldus consented to his burial in the church of the monastery. Finally, his funeral was attended by all the inhabitants of Reggio and its surroundings, including ‘the archbishop with the retinue of the clergy’,¹³⁵ to mark vividly coexistence – sometimes difficult, but certainly fruitful – between the different ethnic groups of the Norman (and Swabian) kingdom.

Notes

- * A partially different version of this contribution was published in Italian in the *journal Aionos* 17 (2011–12), 101–41.
- 1 The bibliography on the subject is now very extensive, starting from the still fundamental Chalandon 1907, and continuing with Pontieri 1964; Tramon-tana 1986; Tabacco 1989. See, among others, the studies contained in Licinio and Violante 2006. About contrasts – and convergences – between the Normans and Byzantines and the politics of expansion of Guiscard and Bohe-mond, see McQueen 1986; Russo 2006.
- 2 Ménager 1959; Ménager 1958–1959a; Ménager 1958–1959b; von Falkenhausen 1998a.
- 3 von Falkenhausen 1987.
- 4 von Falkenhausen 1977a. See Peters-Custot 2009.
- 5 von Falkenhausen 2009.
- 6 Still useful is Scaduto 1947. See also Fonseca 1975; von Falkenhausen 1977b. On the Patir monastery of Rossano, see Batiffol 1891; Breccia 2006. Under Roger II, the famous monastery of St Savior of Messina was built: the sovereign regulated its legal position in a decree dated to 1131 and with a diploma in February 1133, and conferred the title of Archimandrite to Luke, with the control on 41 Greek monasteries of eastern Sicily and southern Calabria. An edition of the decree of 1131 was published by Cusa 1868, 292–4. The diploma of 1133, in the Latin translation, was published by Pirri 1733, 974–6. See Scaduto 1947, 180–5; Foti 1989, *passim*; von Falkenhausen 1983b; von Falkenhausen 1994. Now also Re 2000, 249–50.
- 7 Lucà 1993a.
- 8 Still useful is Borsari 1963. See also Morini 1999.
- 9 Efthymiades 2011, 349–50.
- 10 Da Costa-Louillet 1959–1960; Hester 1988; Follieri 2006, 103–4.
- 11 Re 2011, 233–4.
- 12 For example, towards the Peloponnese, and specifically to Patras, the goal of St Athanasios of Catania, the future bishop of Modon; or to Thessalonica, where St Joseph, the hymn writer, went before settling in the capital, Constantinople. At Thessalonica Elias the Younger would die, during the trip that was supposed to take him to Constantinople, to the presence of Emperor Leo VI; and St Phantinos the Younger lived there, where he came into contact with the great Athanasios of Athos. See Borsari 1963, 39.
- 13 Schirò 1954.
- 14 Zaccagni 1996. See Caruso 1999b.
- 15 Burgarella 2003, 120–1. See Scaduto 1947, 165–7.

- 16 See below. I will not take into consideration the two *Lives* of St John Theristes, a saint who lived in the tenth century and whose *bioi* (*Vita* A and B), date from the early thirteenth century, nor the *Life* of Marina of Scanio, a Sicilian virgin who lived in the eleventh century: this text, composed in Sicily in the twelfth century, is the story of a woman who disguises herself as a monk in order to travel to the Holy Land. Cf. Acconcia Longo 1988; Rossi Taibbi 1959, 79–107.
- 17 Acconcia Longo 2006, 130.
- 18 Schirò 1954, 84. On the *eparchia* of Salinae see Guillou 1971; Caruso 2004; Minuto 2006; von Falkenhausen 2009b.
- 19 Rossi Taibbi 1962.
- 20 His *bios* is available in *Acta SS. Septembris*, III, Antverpiae 1750, 848–87. We refer to Caruso 1999c, 569–72.
- 21 The *Life* has been published by Arco Magrì 1969.
- 22 The *bios* is available in *Acta SS. Aprilis*, I, Antverpiae 1675, 606–18, and in Martino 2014. See Caruso 1997.
- 23 At the time of the Norman conquest, Isola was suffragan of Santa Severina, along with Umbriatico, Acerenza, Gallipoli, Belcastro: Scaduto 1947, 37.
- 24 Schirò 1954, 5–6.
- 25 Schirò 1954, 84.
- 26 Schirò 1954, 88–9.
- 27 See Lavagnini 1964 and Caruso 1999c, 595.
- 28 Schirò 1954, 90–1.
- 29 Schirò 1954, 90. The phrase ἄθεοι ἐχθροί generated various interpretations: the editor proposed the identification of the ‘godless enemies’ with the new Norman masters (Schirò 1954, 46–9). Acconcia Longo 2006 supports this interpretation, arguing that, by imposing a Latin hierarchy in the region of Sicily, the Normans made this land into a ‘γῆ ἄλαλος’, that is, a country without a voice, where the pastors could not effectively communicate with the communities in need of a thorough re-evangelization after the Arab invasion (152). For the identification of the ‘godless enemies’ with Σαρακηνοί (Arabs), see Lavagnini 1964, 73, n. 1, and Caruso 1999c, 595 and n. 164. Cf. also Pricoco 1989, 294. The latter scholar also believes that the hagiographer refers to the Arabs, but, most importantly, he stresses that it is part of a new hagiographical model wherein Sicily imports, rather than generates, saints: ‘la Sicilia, un tempo maestra di vita monastica, ora terra da rievangelizzare, è talvolta il campo d’azione dei nuovi santi, ma non si tratta più di santi siciliani, né siciliana è la letteratura che ne celebra le vicende’ (295).
- 30 von Falkenhausen 1983a, 191–4, published the oldest of the three testaments; the other two are available in Cusa 1868, 396–402. The shortest can also be found in Cozza-Luzi 1890, 35–9. See Acconcia Longo 2006, 151; Re 2000, 274, n. 120.
- 31 In the first testament: von Falkenhausen 1983a, 194.
- 32 In the third: Cusa 1868, 402. On the variation of the name of the bishop’s see, see von Falkenhausen 1983a, 181.
- 33 Luke was also entrusted with the monastery of St Constantine in Maletto, in the archdiocese of Messina: von Falkenhausen 1983a, 181, n. 34.
- 34 Cusa 1868, 396: καὶ δὴ ἄρτι τῆς σικελῶν νήσου λωφισάσης ἐκ τῶν πολλῶν αἱματοχυσίων καὶ αἰχμαλωσιῶν τῶν γινομένων ὑπὸ τῶν ἀθέων σαρακηνῶν, καὶ γὰρ ἐγὼ ὁ ταπεινὸς πολλὰ ὑπ’ αὐτῶν δεινὰ ἔτλην ἐν τῇ εὐαγεστάτῃ ταύτῃ μονῇ.
- 35 Cusa 1868, 400: διαθήκην, ἥτις καὶ ἐγράφη χειρὶ λουκᾶ ἀμαρτωλοῦ ἐπισκόπου τοῦ γραμματικοῦ. In the synaxarion *Messan. gr.* 103, fol. 65r, one reads: μνήμη τοῦ ὁσίου πατρὸς ἡμῶν Λουκᾶ ἐπισκόπου Εἰσόλων τοῦ γραμματικοῦ τοῦ ἐν

- Σουλάνου (*sic*) κοιμηθέντος; Delehayé 1902, cols 293–294, ll. 36–37; Schirò 1954, 1, n. 1; Lavagnini 1964, 71, n. 1; Acconcia Longo 1995, 82. Re 2000, 274, writes that the term ‘*grammatikòs*’ indicates a notarial role, but the bishop’s scribal talents may have also been employed in the production of books. Cozza-Luzi 1905b suggested that Bishop Luke could have written some *Menaia*, then preserved in the library of Saint Saviour. However likely, we lack any concrete proof for such an activity, as pointed out by Re 2000, 275.
- 36 Schirò 1954, 90–1.
- 37 Acconcia Longo 2006, 151; Acconcia Longo 1995, 83; Lavagnini 1964, 74.
- 38 Caruso 1973. The anti-Latin polemic had in Greek southern Italy a breeding ground and spread from there to the rest of the empire. The polemical writers acknowledged the perfect orthodoxy of Calabrians (we would say, of the Italo-Greeks). See in this regard the anonymous *Opusculum contra Francos* and the *Treaty on the Errors of the Latins* by Constantine Stilbes: Hergenröther 1869, 62–71; Darrouzès 1963. See Pertusi 1972, 503–4; Kolbaba 2000.
- 39 Schirò 1954, 106–7.
- 40 See Lucà 1993a, 17.
- 41 Schirò 1954, 108–9.
- 42 Girgensohn 1973, 25–43; Kamp 1977.
- 43 Ughelli 1721, 506. Ughelli, however, did not see this document, on the authenticity of which Parisi 1956, 319–20, expressed serious doubts.
- 44 In this monastery of Vioterito Luke took refuge as he approached his own death, which occurred December 10, 1114, so that he was buried there: Schirò 1954, 112. As to the location of Vioterito (or Viteorito), it is to be placed near Molochio, on the Aspromonte, not far from Oppido: Parisi 1956, 321–2. See Minuto 1996, 86–7. A different location was proposed by Acconcia Longo 1995, 82, n. 63, according to whom Vioterito could be a hill of Isola. But see the following note.
- 45 Schirò 1954, 15. The diploma is transmitted in a late vernacular translation: Martire Cosentino 1876, 64; Parisi 1956, 334–5. See Minisci 1952, 68; von Falkenhausen 1998b, 111. It contains a chronological error as it indicates the year since the creation of the world 6518, fourth indiction. Now, that date, with the octave indiction, corresponds to 1010, far from the period of Adelasia and Roger. On the possible corrections, which aim to restore the year 1110 or 1111, see von Falkenhausen 1998b, 111, n. 129. The diploma allows us to resolve the problem of the precise location of Mount Vioterito, since it states that *tutte queste cose [...] l’habbiamo concesse e date al prefato Tempio di S. Nicolò, sito nel monte Vioterito territorio di Calabria, Castello di Seminara, p(er) nutriment(o) e sustentatio(ne) del venerando P(ad)re Miser Luca, e suoi Monaci p(resen)ti e futuri, che saranno in perpetuum*: Parisi 1956, 335. Transl.: ‘All these things have we granted and given to the aforementioned Temple of St Nicolò, located on Mount Vioterito in Calabria, Castello of Seminara, for the nourishment and upkeep of the holy Father Luke and his present and future monks, who will continue to be there forever’.
- 46 Schirò 1954, 120–1. See Efthymiades 2011, 362.
- 47 Follieri 2006, 122.
- 48 Joannou 1960. See Pertusi 1983; Acconcia Longo 1995, 78.
- 49 In 1079 the Patriarch of Constantinople ordained Archbishop of Reggio a priest called Basil, who refused to submit to the authority of the pope and therefore could not take possession of his see, now definitely under the jurisdiction of Rome: Holtzmann 1928, 43–6, 66; Stiennon 1964. See von

- Falkenhausen 1991, 275–6, who rightly observes that although the metropolitan of Reggio and his chapter were Latin-speaking Normans, the population was Greek-speaking and of Byzantine rite. Hence the need for a mediator such as Luke, Greek bishop of neighboring town of Bova, who defined himself as ‘διακονητὴς τῆς μεγάλης Ῥηγινῶν μητροπόλεως’.
- 50 Acconcia Longo 1995, 80.
- 51 Schirò 1946, 19–21.
- 52 Russo 1948, and, with more caution after the publication of the *Life* of Bishop Luke and of the works of Luke of Bova, Russo 1963.
- 53 Acconcia Longo 1995, 82–3.
- 54 von Falkenhausen 1991, 276, n. 170. See Acconcia Longo 1995, 80.
- 55 Caruso 1999a, 70, n. 100. Re 2011, 236.
- 56 Luke seems to have died on 27 February 1149: Mercati 1935, 168 and 172; Caruso 1999a, 70.
- 57 Rossi Taibbi 1969 232–8. Another *enkomion*, rather generic, is published in PG 127, 500–512. See Beck 1959, 641.
- 58 Zaccagni 1996, 203–4, suggested that Philagathos of Cerami (or ‘a disciple of his “school”’) could be the author of the *Vita*, but see Caruso 1999b, 315–18. See Zaccagni 2007.
- 59 Proiou 1980: *canones* XX–XXII, 243–72.
- 60 *Can.* XX, vv. 223–39.
- 61 Proiou 1980, 497, n. 1.
- 62 Proiou 1980, 499.
- 63 Zaccagni 1996, 207–8, Chapter 5–6.
- 64 Zaccagni 1996, Chapter 9.
- 65 Zaccagni 1996, Chapter 12. See the *Life of St Phantinos*, ed. Follieri 1993, Chapter 15, p. 418.
- 66 Zaccagni 1996, 214, Chapter 13 (Ital. transl. 245).
- 67 On this figure see von Falkenhausen 1985.
- 68 It is likely that Bartholomew was already in touch with the Great Count Roger I, as well as with his wife Adelasia del Vasto, who became regent for their children Simon (who died in 1105) and then Roger, from 1101 until 1112, the year of latter’s major age. In the *bios* Roger (the future Roger II) is mentioned as ῥήξ, but this is clearly a *hysteron proteron* because at that stage he was not yet king. See von Falkenhausen 1998b, *passim*; Houben 1999; Aubé 2002.
- 69 Zaccagni 1996, 216, Chapter 17: ἀνὴρ παρὰ μὲν τοῖς ἐπιγείοις βασιλεῦσι μέγала τὸ τηνικαῦτα δυνάμενος (Ital. transl. 251).
- 70 Zaccagni 1996, 251, nn. 68 and 70. Caruso 1999b, 343, n. 110, asserts that Philagathos of Cerami would use for Roger II the title *basileus* of Ausons, but, actually, the words of Philagathos (ἐγνώσαν αὐτὸν καὶ βασιλεῖς Αὐσόνων καὶ εἰδότες ἐθαύμασαν) are definitely related to the Byzantine emperors: Rossi Taibbi 1969, 238, Chapter 14. In Greek sources of the Comnenian age the expression *basileus* of Ausons in relation to the Byzantine rulers was widespread: see for example Nic. Callicl. 2, 34; 19, 31 Romano, Alex. Comn. *Mus.* 1 Maas ὁ γῆς Αὐσόνων αὐτοκράτωρ; Const. Manass. *Hodoep.* I, 206 Horna βασιλεῖ γῆς Αὐσόνων; Man. Phil. *carm.* I, 173, 40 (I, p. Miller 84) ὁ κρατῶν γῆς Αὐσόνων; Theod. Prodr. 18, 83 Hörandner βασιλεὺς Αὐσόνων; 22 3 Αὐσόνων αὐτοκράτωρ Hörandner. Cf. von Falkenhausen 2002, *praes.* p. 91. Vera von Falkenhausen, in a letter to me, expressed the opinion that the passage in question in the *bios* (Chapter 17) ‘si riferisce in forma molto generica alle autorità normanne, visto che nella stessa frase v’è una contrapposizione retorica tra ἐπιγείοις βασιλεῦσι e ἐπουρανίου βασιλέως’.

[transl.: generically refers to the Norman rulers, since in this phrase there is a rhetorical juxtaposition between earthly and heavenly rulers]. I warmly thank her for this clarification as for other indications, and for the valuable lines of inquiry which she generously suggested. See Breccia 2006, 27, n. 14.

71 See below.

72 See below.

73 Zaccagni 1996, 216, Chapter 17 (Ital. transl. 251). The editor considers utterly unlikely that Bartholomew and the Admiral Christodoulos actually exchanged letters (Zaccagni 1996, 251, n. 69: 'decisamente improbabile [. . .] la realtà storica di questa corrispondenza tra Bartolomeo e l'ammiraglio Cristodulo'). Perhaps things were different: the relations between the two men and the Byzantine customs of epistolary communication could have left traces of an 'official' correspondence, known to the hagiographer even if it was not transmitted to us. See Caruso 1999b, 313.

74 Zaccagni 1996, 217–18, Chapter 19 Genecocastro is the current Belcastro, but the bishop should probably be identified with the namesake titular of Cerenzia in 1099: Burgarella 2003, 124.

75 Zaccagni 1996, 219, Chapter 21 (Ital. transl. 256–57). See Proiou 1980: *Can.* XX, 250, vv. 146–152; *Can.* XXI, 259, vv. 113–118.

76 Breccia 2006, 64–5.

77 Breccia 2006, 64.

78 Caruso 1999c, 598. Caruso noted that Bartholomew's journey to Rome is not intended primarily (and thus officially) to venerate the tombs of the Apostles, as we usually find in the *Lives* of the earlier Italo-Greek saints. See also Sans-terre 1985; Luongo 1999; Efthymiades 2011, 356.

79 von Falkenhausen 1994, 44–5: 'si servì semplicemente delle antiche e collaudate tecniche del monachesimo bizantino per aggirare la giurisdizione e le ingerenze dell'ordinario diocesano a favore di autorità più altolocate, ma più lontane'. See Burgarella 2003, 124–5; Breccia 2006, 65–7.

80 Zaccagni 1996, 222, Chapter 25. On the role that such a trip would have played for the circulation of texts of Oriental origin in Southern Italy, see Lucà 1985–1986, 144–9; Lucà 1993b; Breccia 1997; Breccia 1998. Scholars tried to reconstruct the imperial core of Patir's library, but read the remarks by D'Aiuto 2004, 172–3. See also Morini in this volume, at pp. 191–207.

81 See *Analecta Hymnica Graeca . . .*, *Can.* XX, 250–51, vv. 153–159: ἐπιγνοὺς ἐκ τῶν λόγων σου / βασιλεὺς αὐτοκράτωρ / ὡς πατρὶ προσανείχε σοι / σὺν πάσῃ τῇ συγκλήτῳ, / θαυμάσας τὸν ζῆλόν σου / καὶ τὴν ἐν λόγοις ἰσχὺν / καὶ τὸ ἀθώπευτον; *Can.* XXI, 258, vv. 92–98, where we find, in reference to Alexios and Irene (as in the preceding canon, not named in a direct way), the expression βασιλεῖς . . . Αὐσόνων: see above, v 70.

82 Zaccagni 1996, 222, Chapter 25 (Ital. transl. 263).

83 Zaccagni 1996, Chapter 26: καὶ ὅπερ εἰς τὸν Ἅγιον Ὅρος ἐκέκτιστο μοναστήριον ἐπ' ὀνόματι τοῦ ἐν ἁγίοις πατρὸς ἡμῶν καὶ οὐρανοφάντορος Βασιλείου, αὐτὰ ἐδωρήσατο, εὐεργετεῖσθαι μᾶλλον ἐκ τούτου ἢ εὐεργεσίαν παρέχειν μάλα εἰκότως οἰόμενος.

84 Zaccagni 1996, Chapter 26 (Ital. transl. 264).

85 Pertusi 1963, 240; Pertusi 1972, 501.

86 Zaccagni 1996, 221, Chapter 24 (Ital. transl. 261). On the cult of St Apollinaris in Calabria and in southern Italy see Burgarella 2005, 101–3.

87 See Lucà 1993b, 206–8.

88 Breccia 1997, 209–24; Breccia 1998, 37–43.

89 Re 1997.

- 90 Re 1997, 73: see also his comments on the formation of the monastery's library at p. 74. Cf. Lucà 1985–1986, 96, 105.
- 91 Breccia 2006, 82.
- 92 Caruso 1999c, 599, pointed out that Bartholomew likely used the buying of books and sacred vessels as an excuse for his journey to Constantinople, which probably consisted of some secret diplomatic mission.
- 93 von Falkenhausen 1998b, 104.
- 94 Weyl Carr 1997, 81–99, *praes.* 95. See von Falkenhausen 2006, 62.
- 95 Breccia 2006, 29 and 82; von Falkenhausen 1985, 49.
- 96 Breccia 2006, 82 and doc. 2, 141–9.
- 97 Burgarella 2003, 119–33.
- 98 Anna Comnena, *Alexiad.* 13, 12, 28.
- 99 Burgarella 2003, 130, n. 43.
- 100 Breccia 2006, doc. 2, 141–9.
- 101 Kazhdan and Ronchey 1997, 168; Burgarella 2003, 131.
- 102 Cantarella 2000; Spiteris 1979, 64–70; Caruso 1999a, 70–1.
- 103 *Acta Romanorum Pontificum*, 385, 796–8. The pope wrote to Emperor Alexios and praised his commitment and efforts to promote the unity of the Churches, confirmed also by the imperial messenger: *Et fidelissimi ac sapientissimi nuntii vestri, B. Mesimeri relatio nos plenius certificavit* (797).
- 104 Burgarella 2003, 131.
- 105 Grumel and Darrouzès 1989, 432–4, nn. 975 [980] and 976 [981].
- 106 Grumel and Darrouzès 1989, 444, n. 983 [958].
- 107 Zaccagni 1996, 224, Chapter 28.
- 108 Minuto 1998, 45–6; Caruso 1999a, 51–72.
- 109 Zaccagni 1996, 224–5, Chapter 28–29.
- 110 Zaccagni 1996, 225, Chapter 29 (Ital. transl. 269–70).
- 111 According to the biographer, Luke was sent to Messina, along with ‘other twelve monks and holy men worthy of esteem from his flock, giving them half of the books, half of the iconostasis and other furnishings and great riches’: Zaccagni 1996, 226, Chapter 30 (Ital. transl. 271). Of the library of St Savior account is given in the preface to the *typikon* of the monastery, written by the first Archimandrite Luke: Cozza-Luzi 1905a, 121–30; Arranz 1969 (critical edition of *typikon*, without the Preface). See Leroy 1970; Re 1990; Lucà 1993a, 72–5; Re 2000. English translation by Thomas and Constantinides Hero 2000, 643–8.
- 112 Zaccagni 1996, 214, Chapter 14.
- 113 Burgarella 2003, 133. See also Burgarella 2001, 45–63.
- 114 Smythe 1996, 249–53.
- 115 Armstrong 1996.
- 116 Sargologos 1964. See Mullett 2002; Mullett 2004. Cf. Efthymiades 2011, 365.
- 117 Zaccagni 1996, 222, Chapter 27 (Ital. transl. 265).
- 118 Prinzing 1988.
- 119 Sargologos 1964, 454.
- 120 See Ferrante 1981, 225.
- 121 Schirò 1950, 88–97.
- 122 On Byzantine and Norman Reggio see von Falkenhausen 1991.
- 123 Kamp 2000.
- 124 Stiernon 1974.
- 125 See Re 2011, 237: ‘this is a text without any recognisable plot whatsoever, and it must be considered as an extended synaxarion notice rather than a true *Vita*. Its protagonist is a saintly physician who cures people because of his humane principles without resorting to miracles’.

- 126 Schirò 1950, 88–9.
- 127 Schirò 1950, 92–5. See the *Life of St Phantinos*, ed. Follieri 1993, 23, 426.
- 128 Lacerenza in this vol.
- 129 von Falkenhausen 1991, 262–3; 265–6.
- 130 Ullmann 1970, 147–9.
- 131 Lucà 2007. On the manuscript *Vat. gr. 300*, the oldest witness of the Greek version of the *Manual of the Traveller* by al-Jazzār, probably written in Messina in the first thirty years of the twelfth century and commissioned by the doctor from Reggio, Philip Xeros, see Lucà 1993a, 36–63; Ieraci Bio 2006; Lucà 2012, 579–84. Lucà points out that medical texts circulated within monastic circles, since monks run hospitals and needed the practical knowledge for cures that the copies of Hippocrates and Galen transmitted.
- 132 Schirò 1950, 92–3.
- 133 Schirò 1954, 112–13. It is, however, the convention, which is typical of the hagiographical genre, known as ‘la fiction du témoin bien informé’ (Delehay 1966, 182–3).
- 134 Schirò 1954, 114–15.
- 135 Schirò 1950, 96–7.

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7 Monastic interactions between Calabria and Mount Athos in the Middle Ages

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In 963, in one of the many Eastern monastic areas – neither the biggest, nor the oldest – an event took place, destined to change the history of Orthodox monasticism and to project this singular ‘monastic republic’ (a traditional – even if improper – expression describing its ancient form of ecclesiastical self-government) from the periphery to the center of the Orthodox monastic *oikoumene*, and to become, gradually, a center both of attraction and of irradiation. This event was, of course, the foundation of the monastery of the Great Lavra, jointly established by St Athanasios the Athonite and the Emperor Nikephoros II Phokas.¹ It involved grafting a form of community life (characterized by a compelling force of attraction), into the hermitic ‘reserve,’ spontaneously born as a refuge for the spiritual elite of the monastic ‘mountains’ of Bithynia, an elite nostalgic of the solitary life. In fact, this was somehow – at the spiritual level – the product of the synthesis developed in Asia Minor with the aim of harmonizing into a single experience of monastic life both the fruits of virtuous coenobitism and the excellence of eremitism;² and – at the institutional level – the substitution of a coenobitism relaxed in discipline and poor in goods, with the novelty of a great imperial foundation (granted by the protection of the sovereign, who provided also significant resources for its survival). The result of this development was that the monastic area of Chalkidiki (until then in the orbit of Mount Olympus) assumed a central role in the Greek-Eastern monastic *oikoumene*, also due to the fact that all forms of monastic life were represented there, from the traditional eremitism to the then more fashionable ‘reformed’ coenobitism.

In the same period, the Hellenophone monasticism of Southern Italy, first Byzantine and then Norman, presents areas of high monastic concentration, e.g., in the Piana delle Saline,³ some of which are clearly comparable to veritable ‘monastic areas’ such as the Merkourion,⁴ in Northern Calabria, and the Latinianon, on the border with Basilicata. Our sources do not allow us to say with any certainty if these places were institutions of self-government (such as *synaxis*), or were governed by head figures (such as the *protos*), making it somehow similar to the organizational structures of Mount Athos. Even there both forms of monastic life were

present, and the strong dialectic between eremitism and coenobitism is similarly resolved, by virtue of a synthesis where the communal life itself is conditioned by a constant and irrepressible tendency to *hesychia*, that gave to the Italo-Greek monastic 'reform' its particular characteristics.

Despite the different origins and the different evolution of monastic history of these two ascetic regions of the same and unitary Eastern-Greek monastic *oikoumene*, it is exactly because of their common belonging to the same ascetic-spiritual context and to the same cultural and institutional space, that the two could not ignore each other. What can be observed is that interactions move from the periphery to the center, insofar as we have no evidence of monks who have moved or have traveled from Mount Athos to monastic Italo-Greek areas, while we have evidence of monks who took the opposite route.

It is the author of the *Life of St Neilos the Younger* who gives us the first testimony. This biographer is undoubtedly a direct disciple of the saint of Rossano, who lived in the monastery of Grottaferrata, while his identification with the disciple and co-founder of the same monastery is no longer plausible. He reports that Neilos asked to his monks a proof of obedience (obedience, which is one of the fundamental virtues, with laboriousness, of coenobitic asceticism) so striking for its harshness, that the news reached as far as Mount Athos:⁵ during the first phase of his monastic life (partially communitarian) at the monastery of Sts Adrian and Natalia, he ordered that the vineyards of the monastery be burnt down. We will never know if this information actually reached the Holy Mountain, or whether this was an exaggeration on the part of the hagiographer, to serve the celebrative purposes of the hagiographical genre. Had this happened, then we should assume the very early existence of a channel of communication between the two monastic areas, when St Athanasios was still alive and working at Athos (St Neilos and St Athanasios died almost at the same time), and when his new monastic proposal had just begun to be established on the Holy Mountain. But it seems more likely that we face an emphatic underlining by the hagiographer, who mirrors backwards his own times, the early decades of the eleventh century when the *Life of St Neilos* was probably being written in Grottaferrata, and when Mount Athos itself had radically changed its monastic lifestyle and had become a model for the whole Greek monastic *oikoumene*, a model admired if not imitated. In other words, this hint proposed by the *Life of St Neilos*, more than a tribute to the fame of the saint, is a tribute to Mount Athos.

A Calabrian monk on the Sacred Mountain: Nikephoros the Naked

Apparently the news seems to attest the spread of a knowledge that goes from the periphery of the monastic *oikoumene* to what is now its center;

in reality, in our opinion, it attests the contrary, namely that the ascetic reputation of Athos has now reached this suburb. Approximately at the same chronological level we find more evidence of the inverse relationship between the two monastic areas (i.e., from the periphery to the center) in hagiographical sources written in the East. We refer mainly to St Athanasios the Athonite's two *Lives*: the first, called *Vita A*, is believed to be the work of Athanasios of Panagiotou, and dated to the first quarter of the eleventh century (i.e., between the saint's death that tragically occurred between 997 and 1006 and Emperor Basil II's, in 1025). The second, called *Vita B*, is more recent and anonymous. Alexander Kazhdan convincingly suggested that both derive from a previous, lost text.⁶ Both those *Lives* – and probably the hypothetically lost early *Life* of the saint, too – enumerate the most distant regions from where aspirants to the monastic life were attracted by the fame of Athanasios's spiritual teaching. Among them we find Calabria, Italy (probably the *theme* of Langobardia) and Amalfi⁷ (the Benedictine Amalphitan monastery on Mount Athos is very well documented). To this quite generic news, both existing *Lives* add a relevant piece of information about a monk, emphatically and favorably presented, who moved from Calabria (precisely from the monastic area of Merkourion) to Athos, and there became a famous disciple of the ascetics of Athanasios the Great. This monk was Nikephoros the Naked, the companion of St Phantinos the Younger on his mystic flight from West to East, but the one who, while his teacher settled (perhaps with his other disciple, Vitalios) in Thessaloniki, appear to have almost immediately moved further to Mount Athos, probably attracted by Athanasios's fame.⁸ In the *Vita B* he is listed beneath those 'hermits and anchorites *siderophoroi*, who grew old during their many years of asceticism, and, by divine disposition, went to him [Athanasios] and asked to be guided by him': this was seen as such a paradoxical phenomenon – especially in a time of high dialectical tension between hermitic and coenobitic lifestyles, – that the hagiographer had to recall the divine *oikonomia* to justify it, thus, he allowed us to perceive the great prestige of Athanasios. Nikephoros was the perfect candidate to represent an eremitical alternative to the monastic ideal of Athanasios. His description faithfully reflects the ardor for *hesychia*, a characteristic of Italo-Greek contemporary monasticism (in its coenobitic outcomes, too); however, Athanasios – consistently with the coenobitic system he modeled on the micro-Asian synthesis – allows him to follow his ideal of solitary life, clearly in a dependence of that composite coenobium which was then the *Lavra*. So, from his arrival, Nikephoros can be positioned – despite his choice to ask for Athanasios's fatherhood – in the context of the pre-Athanasian Athos, both from the institutional and from the ascetic-spiritual point of view. He seems, in fact, more a follower of the mythical Peter – the model of the absolute eremitism at Mount Athos – and a successor of St Euthymios the Younger – the founder of the monastery of Peristeri in Chalkidiki – than a disciple of Athanasios.

So, as it seems, at Mount Athos, Nikephoros keeps practicing the ascetic exercise of nudity – a teaching of his first master, St Phantinos, who practiced and preached ascetic nudity at the Merkourion¹⁰ – covered only with a cloth woven of animal hair (τριχίνην μόνην σινδόνα), according to the anchorites's tradition, and he followed a diet typical of the hermits: dry bran bread (πίτυρα) soaked in warm water and seasoned with salt.¹¹ However, when his dress was completely worn, Nikephoros did not follow the hesycast diehards, who continued to wander in the mountains, barefoot and covered only by overgrown beard and hair. Instead, he entered the Lavra of Athanasios, where he reached perfection through submission, the virtue *par excellence* of a coenobium, something entirely alien to the trials of the solitary life. The anonymous author of the *Vita B* underlines that 'τὴν ὅλην αὐτοῦ διαγωγὴν εἰς τὴν τῶν κοινοβιακῶν κατήλλαξεν'¹² and, as for Athanasios, this radical change in the form of monastic asceticism did not necessarily involve a 'conversion' from hermitical to coenobitical life, but rather implied and represented the profound harmony with the directions of his new guide. In fact, the micro-Asian monastic synthesis – of which Athanasios was a representative exponent – was based on the premise of the essential unity of monastic life, which is enhanced, rather than compromised, by the existence of the two forms of asceticism: the solitary and the communal. This reform, theoretical in its core, and institutional by consequence, gave to each of the two monastic lifestyles an instrumental function towards the ultimate goal of monastic life: the purification of the heart, aimed at God's praise, to be obtained by way of combat of the vices and exercise of virtues. Actually, for this purpose, the passage from one form of monastic life to another was extremely desirable (even if only for those strong enough to stand this change), as it allowed some monks to benefit from the spiritual advantages of both lifestyles in order to achieve perfection. And the hagiographers of St Athanasios record that the Calabrian monk Nikephoros, who had first lived as an absolute hermit on Mount Athos, and then as a cenobite, had reached that perfection, as it is testified by the miraculous phenomenon of the *myron*, which abundantly flowed from his bones.

A marginal note in a precious codex from the monastery of Grottaferata, a codex surely transcribed by St Neilos himself, containing the *Lausiac History* of Palladius (*Crypt.* B. β. I), alludes to the 'holy Nikephoros the Naked of blessed memory'. If – as suggested by Enrica Follieri – this was a note of possession,¹³ then we have on the pages of one of the most valuable Italo-Greek manuscripts (a codex which has never left Italy) a significant testimony concerning this Calabrian monk, disciple of St Phantinos and later of St Athanasios, dead and revered as *myrovritos* on Mount Athos. This suggests that the radicalism of his asceticism, and the almost provocative form it had assumed, were clearly not incompatible with a cultivated personality, a lover of spiritually-edifying readings, and (at least once in his monastic life) owner of books. As Enrica Follieri

wrote: 'here we have a light on the specific culture of the Italo-Greek monastic world even in its most radical forms of asceticism, and on the importance of the book'.¹⁴ Moreover, since this note, likely one of possession, has the character of an obituary, it represents also an incontrovertible evidence of a flow of information which from the monastic center reaches the outskirts: in fact, the news of the death of Nikephoros the Naked at the Lavra on Mount Athos arrives promptly all the way to the Italo-Greek monastic area of Grottaferrata.

A triangular meeting: Phantinos, Athanasios of Lavra, and Paul the Eunuch

It is the *Life* of Nikephoros's first spiritual guide, the great Phantinos (a text composed in the shade of the Sacred Mountain by one of his disciples from Thessaloniki, between 986 and 996), which gives us evidence of a further meeting between Italo-Greek monasticism and Mount Athos. This meeting happened, so to speak, in neutral territory: Phantinos went (on a specific day and time) to the door called Cassandriotice; there he waited for the passage – which he had prophetically known – of two monks from Mount Athos going to Athens.¹⁵ On their arrival, he prostrated himself to ask for their blessing, but they paid no attention to the unknown monk. Only then Phantinos revealed to one of his disciples, outraged by what he had seen, that those two monks were the great Athanasios and Paul the Eunuch, those 'who illuminate the desert spots like a lighthouse'.¹⁶ Later, when those two saints, on the return trip, stopped in Thessaloniki expressly to meet Phantinos, whose fame they already knew, they immediately recognized him as that unknown postulant and admired his humility.

Regardless of the historical reality of the meeting – Jacques Noret¹⁷ excludes it, while Enrica Follieri¹⁸ does not, – this episode presents, in my opinion, strong emblematic and institutional values, symbolically expressed in a narrative context: values that are strictly related to the two significant personalities of Athonite monasticism presented here, and which reflect their personal relationships. If Athanasios – and his idea of monastic life – has already been described, Paul the Eunuch is now identified as Paul I of Xeropotamou, founder of the eponymous monastery on Mount Athos, and later of that of Hagiou Pavlou. A later hagiography describes him, with a resounding anachronism, as the son of Emperor Michael I Rangabe (811–813),¹⁹ but the history presents him as the most prestigious opponent, on Mount Athos, of Athanasios and of his monastic proposal. From the *Lives* of St Athanasios, we learn about Paul's leading role in the monastic *synaxis* of Karyes.²⁰ Moreover, from the *typikon* of the Emperor John I Tzimiskes (a *typikòn* promulgated between 971 and 972 and also known as the *Tragos typikòn*), we learn that only a few years earlier Paul was chosen to accompany to Constantinople the *protos*

of Mount Athos²¹ – another Athanasios – where they went to submit to the Emperor the request to remove St Athanasios from Mount Athos. Clearly, this happened at the apex of the conflict between old and new monasticism on Mount Athos, when the monk Nicholas wrote the *Life of St Peter the Athonite*,²² an ideological manifesto that gave voice to hard-core eremitism. Therefore, it seems unlikely that the two opponents were traveling together. One can only speculate that the hagiographer knew about the mission of the *protos* and of St Paul to Constantinople, and that he – by mistake or on purpose – exchanged the two Athanasioses and changed the destination of the trip. The exemplarity of the episode lies in the fact that Athonite monasticism is presented to Phantinos, the famous Italo-Greek ascetic, in its two main components, personified in the two most important figures – which were just then engaged in a bitter conflict. On the other hand, the institutional importance of the narration lies in the fact that the two characters – and as a result their conceptions of monastic life – are described as reconciled. In the light of this description of the re-composition of dialectical tensions, we cannot avoid evoking the synthesis between those two ideological lines proposed shortly before in Asia Minor, and which was undergoing in those years a direct verification, as we said at the beginning, either on Mount Athos and, with special features, in the Greek monastic areas of Southern Italy.

A Calabrian monk teaching at Mount Athos: Bartholomew of Simeri

All the evidence recorded so far dates from the period between the last quarter of the tenth century and the first quarter of the eleventh, that is, the first stage in the history of both Italo-Greek and Athonite monasticism. Hellenophone Italy was then being reshaped by a monastic reform that promoted the transition from a hermitic life to the coenobitic, considered more effective to the achievement of salvation, whereas it was axiomatic that perfection could be achieved only within the solitary life. On Mount Athos a similar phenomenon was happening – even apart from these specific reasons – with the presence of absolute hermits like Nikephoros and of organized groups of hermits under the leadership of Athanasios. But here, too, the process had just begun, as we see with the diffusion of large coenobitical foundations on the Athanasian model (such as Vatopedi and Iviron), where changes regarding the statement of ideals and the new institutional models – in parallel with the phenomenon of internationalization of this monastic area, by means of the influx of monastic communities ethnically different from the Greek – were experimented.

The contacts between Mount Athos and Hellenophone Italy were maintained during the next period of their respective monastic histories, even when – on the Holy Mountain – the coenobitical hegemony and

the phenomenon of 'internationalization' were settled and permanently acquired, and when in Southern Italy Greek monasticism (already bound to the Latin civil and ecclesiastical domination) was further reformed in the way of a coenobitic maximalism and of a centralization process, both imposed by the Norman political power. Indeed, it is precisely with Bartholomew of Simeri that we recognize a shift. In fact, among the Italo-Greek monastic exponents, Bartholomew was the one more deeply involved in both operations, and his positive actions made the contacts between Italo-Greek monasticism and Mount Athos concrete and compelling. His actions increase the evidence of contacts (in some cases shadowy and symbolic) from the previous period.

Even at this time, perhaps more than ever, the movement was from the periphery to the center. According to his biographer, Bartholomew went to Constantinople at the apex of his monastic *curriculum*. He had already founded the great monastery of *Nea Hodigitiria* near Rossano – later known as *Patir* or *Patírion*, – a monastery which enjoyed revenues from the Norman kings (Adelasia and Roger II) and from the *ammiràs* Christodoulos (Abd-er-Rahman en Nasrani, an Arab converted to Christianity), and which had an exemption confirmed by the archbishop of Rossano, Nicholas Maleinòs, and by a *sigillion* of Pope Paschal II. The reason for his trip to Constantinople was to equip his new foundation with books for the training of monks, liturgical objects and icons. The hagiographer significantly uses for the destination a very evocative terminology, calling the Capital 'Queen of the cities and New Rome',²³ an intentional expression of loyalty to Constantinople. Bartholomew's journey is significant from several points of view. It was, in fact, a return to his cultic and cultural roots, but it was also a way to reaffirm his own religious identity and his linguistic diversity; it was an eloquent sign of what Bartholomew thought of the relations between his Latin Norman king – to whom he was faithfully and devotedly subjected – and the only Roman Christian emperor – to whom his king was affirmed dependent. In the same context, he affirmed his ecclesiastical belonging to the patriarchate of the West, a patriarchate perfectly legitimate only in the frame of the pentarchical system, a system which – regardless of different rituals – covered the area of the whole Christian world.

A problem with this plan arose during the Calabrian monk's brief stay in Constantinople, during which he was also admitted to the presence of the Emperor Alexios I Komnenos and of his wife Irene Doukaina. In fact, Bartholomew changed his plans because a *patrikios* called Basil Kalimeris, who had probably known him at the imperial court and who had been strongly attracted by Bartholomew's spiritual stature, persuaded him to accept a different assignment. The *patrikios* not only gave him some precious fabric for liturgical use, but also a monastery from his property, located on Mount Athos and dedicated to St Basil, so that the Calabrian monk would take the leadership of the coenobium and renew

its spiritual life (apparently a declining one at that date).²⁴ According to Bartholomew's hagiographer, the monastery belonged to the *patrikios* Basil, thus meaning that he was not also its founder. In this period, in fact, reference to belonging could be applied either to the founder, or to the *charistikarios*, i.e., a secular person of high social status who received the property of a monastery to guarantee its sustenance (acquiring its income in exchange) and to supervise its spiritual fervor.²⁵ So, it is by virtue of this kind of property rights on the monastery (that he enjoyed as *charistikarios*), and of his institutional duty to provide for the spiritual fervor of the monastery, that Basil was in the position to gift the monastery to Bartholomew, with the specific aim of deeply reforming its spiritual life. It is likely that – through this donation – Basil performed a double operation: a real change of ownership, and the appointment of the Calabrian monk as *hegumenos*, a kind of appointment that sometimes fell within the prerogatives of the *charistikarios*. If this really happened, we would have here the most explicit evidence for the relationship between Italo-Greek monasticism and Mount Athos, of a movement from the periphery to the center (while the contrary is still a more plausible hypothesis): one of the fathers and leaders of Southern Italian monasticism becoming the owner and the *hegumenos* of an Athonite monastery, and, moreover, the reformer of its spirituality and lifestyle – surely according to the same criteria he had adopted in his Calabrian foundations.

No other source confirms this event. That is why, surprised by the exceptional nature of it, Pierre Batiffol²⁶ denied veracity to this episode, which instead was deemed credible by Mario Scaduto,²⁷ Teodoro Minisci²⁸ and more recently by Stefano Caruso.²⁹ We must give credit to Agostino Pertusi³⁰ for highlighting an element that, while not giving apodictic evidence of the fact, makes the event possible, or even probable. At the closure of the episode, the hagiographer affirms that, by virtue of Bartholomew's work, the Athonite monastery of St Basil was called, from that moment on, 'of the Calabrian'. Pertusi analyzes an *hypomnima* for the monastery of Iviron, written by Paul, the *protos* of Athos, in 1080, where he found the explicit mention of a 'monastery of the Calabrian'.³¹ The fact that this was the same monastery mentioned in the *Vita* of St Bartholomew is confirmed by a donation of the *kellion* of Profourni in Karyes, made by the *protos* John Tarchaneiotis in favor of the *Megisti Lavra* (perhaps dating back to 1108), where among the witnesses is listed also the *hegumenos* Ignatios from the monastery of Basil 'of the Calabrians'.³² Thus, on the basis of the document of 1080, the Athonite monastery 'of the Calabrian' has its name even before Bartholomew's arrival on Mount Athos. Pertusi's hypothesis was aimed at not subverting the chronology of the Calabrian monk, so placing his journey to Constantinople before, not after, the foundation of the *Patir*. So, starting from the homonymy between the *ktitor* and the patron saint of the monastery, Pertusi suggested that the *patrikios* Basil could have

been a Calabrian, and that he could have founded a monastery dedicated to his eponymous saint. Without questioning this possible foundation from the *patrikios*, the grammatical plural in the later document of 1108 could, instead, suggest that the monastery of St Basil was then one of the 'national' monasteries, a kind of institution which then began to affirm itself on the Holy Mountain, mainly inhabited by monks coming from the Hellenophone Italian monastic areas.

This is not the only evocation of Italo-Greek monasticism on Athos. Even older proof is recorded while Athanasios was still living: a monastery on Mount Athos was called 'of the Sicilian' in an act of the *protos* Thomas. The act is said to have been prepared by Phantinos, the *hegumenos* of the monastery 'of the Sicilian'.³³ Also, ten years later, another document of the *protos* John lists, among the signatories, a Nikephoros, abbot of the monastery 'of the Sicilian'.³⁴ Again, in a document of the *protos* Theoktistos from 1035, we find the signature of a Gerasimos, *hegumenos* of the monastery 'of the Sicilian'.³⁵ Also, in the aforementioned donation of Profourni to the *Megisti Lavra* of 1080, next to the signature of the *hegumenos* Ignatios of St Basil 'of the Calabrians', we find the signature of John, *hegumenos* of the monastery 'of the Sicilian'.³⁶ Despite the fact that the documents related to this Athonite monastery are more numerous than those related to the monastery 'of the Calabrian/s', we have absolutely no information about the circumstances of its foundation (clearly a very old one), or about its denomination, or its ethnical configuration. In this case, the hypothesis of Agostino Pertusi seems deprived of any confirm from the sources, and is also highly unlikely. Pertusi – though doubtfully – suggested that the 'Sicilian' holder of this monastery could have been St Elias the Younger, from Enna, also known as the Sicilian. He was one of the most ancient and famous exponents of Italo-Greek monasticism, who lived (up to the very beginning of the tenth century) at the *tourma* (an administrative unit) of the Salinae, a Calabrian monastic area. In 903, he died in Thessaloniki (as it would happen at the end of the century to St Phantinos), where he had moved not in order to promote his model of ascetic life in the East, but because he had been called to Constantinople by the Emperor Leo VI the Wise. Thus, he could not have left disciples in the city where his journey ended, nor have them found a monastery on Mount Athos in the name of their master. In fact, the anonymous author of the *Life* of St Elias makes a reference to only one disciple who accompanied him in the East, Daniel, but stating that he returned to Salinae with the relics of the spiritual father. Also, at the beginning of the tenth century, the monastic area of Mount Athos had not yet become so attractive (it would become so only towards the end of the century), and the Hellenophone monks of Sicily, who were mainly settled in the monastic area of Mount Teja, around the monastery of St Philip of Agira, had already withdrawn from the Islamic domination by migrating to the nearest monastic areas of Calabria. Finally, the

constant grammatical singular use of the expression ‘the Sicilian’ – unlike the double designation for the monastery ‘of the Calabrian/Calabrians’ – does not leave enough space to the hypothesis that this could have been a ‘national’ monastery.

However, there is an element – in my opinion not sufficiently considered by Pertusi – which speaks in favor of a sure Italo-Greek presence in the monastery ‘of the Sicilian,’ and specifically the name of the first *hegumenos* attested for the year 986, a name which undoubtedly implies the cult of a saint venerated only in Calabria. In fact, for chronological reasons, it cannot be Phantinos the Younger, monk at the Merkourion and later ascetic in Thessaloniki, but rather the name has to refer to the saint Phantinos the Younger was named after: St Phantinos the Elder of Tauriana. This was a saint, not a monk, probably from Late Antiquity, whose worship was inherited in Italo-Greek areas, and who was indeed emphasized for his miracles.

Moreover, the possibility exists that another Calabrian, in a later period, enlightened with his ascetics the slopes of Mount Athos. He is none other than Nikephoros the Hesychast, a great guide of spiritual life, who in his treatise *Λόγος ὡφελείας μεστὸς περὶ φυλακῆς καρδίας* (as it is transmitted in the manuscripts) has fully taken up the tradition of the Fathers on the practice of sobriety. St Gregory Palamas, who wrote about him in the second of its *Triads for the Defence of the Holy Hesychasts*, simply states that he was of Italian descent (ἐκ Ἰταλῶν) and that, having abandoned the faith of the Latins for the Orthodox one, he retired to Mount Athos. There he acquired great fame as a spiritual guide, perhaps even becoming *hegumenos*. In 1276, he was arrested for his opposition to the unionistic policy of Emperor Michael VIII Palaiologos, taken to trial in Constantinople and in Ptolemais (Acre), where the trial was held in front of the Dominican friar Thomas Agni of Lentini (Latin Patriarch and the Papal Legate), and was finally exiled to Latin Cyprus. Presumably, he returned – after the emperor’s death – on Athos, where he died (at Karyes, according to tradition) before the end of the century.³⁷

However, even if sometimes he is called Nikephoros the Calabrian, it seems unlikely that he was a Calabrian Greek, or even just an Italo-Greek. The only argument in favor of this hypothesis (far from being conclusive) could be the choice of the monastic name Nikephoros, which recalls that of St Nikephoros the Naked, the disciple of St Phantinos in Calabria and that of St Athanasios on Mount Athos. On the other hand, the fact that Palamas called him generically ‘Italian’ and described him as born in the Latin *κακοδοξία*, and that St Nikodemos the Hagiorite defined him as ‘previously Latin’ in his *Akolouthia of the Saint Hagiorite Fathers*,³⁸ leads us to think that he ethnically belonged to the western world. In fact, long after the dreadful 1204, unlike other Westerners, the Calabrians were considered ‘Orthodox Christians’ by the more general conscience of Greek Orthodoxy. This is attested by the *Memorial against*

the Latins of Constantine Stilbes,³⁹ who quoted a passage from the *Opusculum contra Francos* falsely attributed to Photios (but in reality written after the conflict of 1054),⁴⁰ a passage already used between 1054 and 1112 by John of Claudioupolis and by Niketas Seides.⁴¹

Mount Athos: a normative reference

In Norman times, we find a new set of Italo-Greek monastic sources that can usefully be related to the hagiographical ones: the legal texts. These texts are the liturgical ones – the *typikà* which encoded cultural traditions – and the disciplinary ones – which ruled and governed the monasteries's spiritual and material life.⁴² At that time, in the Hellenophone monasteries there was a great flourishing of these disciplinary documents, which seems aimed at guaranteeing for the monasteries, according to an interpretation, complete independence from the figure of *charistikarios*. The shadow of Mount Athos is reflected, through those texts, in the Italo-Greek *typikà*, where a list is provided of the authoritative models that inspired their writers. A cross-reference to a law of 'the Sacred Mountain' is almost always proposed in these lists, harmonized with the two sets of rules – liturgical and disciplinary – on which every monastic rule in the Greek East was rooted: the one from Jerusalem – i.e., the *typikòn* of St Sabas – and the Stoudite one. The latter was a set of laws codified over time (as suggested by Theodore himself) in the Constantinopolitan monastery of Stoudios,⁴³ with a difference. In fact, in the latter two cases the reference is to two specific monastic foundations (the Sabaite Lavra and the monastery of Stoudios) and to normative sources clearly identified, while the reference to Mount Athos remains absolutely generic, never pointing to a specific monastery, but to the whole monastic area. Thus, it is not easy to pinpoint to what texts of the Athonite tradition the Italo-Greek lawmakers directly refer. Pertusi positively affirms that reference is made to the legislation ascribed to St Athanasios, namely the *Hypotyposis* (963, perhaps revisited around 1020),⁴⁴ the *Typikòn* (973–975)⁴⁵ and the *Diathiki* (after 993).⁴⁶ In my opinion, if this was the case, the specific law would have been named – as in the other two cases – according to the monastery (here the Lavra) or after its real or supposed author (here Athanasios). It is therefore perhaps more likely that the reference was to two normative documents, somehow anomalous when compared to the *typikà*. These documents are characterized by attention not to an individual foundation but more generally to the monasticism of Mount Athos. The first one – and perhaps the best known to Italo-Greek legislators – is the *typikòn Tragos* (i.e., written on goat skin), attributed to the Emperor John I Tzimiskes,⁴⁷ but written between 971 and 972 by the superior of the monastery of Stoudios, Euthymios (who had been sent to Athos to resolve the conflict between Athanasios and the extreme hesychasts). While in the Athanasian hagiography the

mediator is described as a supporter of the positions of the founder of Lavra, what emerges clearly from the text (still preserved in the original in the Archive of the *Prótaton* of Karyes on Athos) is that Euthymios had been sent to ensure the interests of all three components of monasticism on Mount Athos: the new coenobitism, the organized anchorites and the absolute hermits. A second document could be recognized in the *Typikòn* of Constantine IX Monomachos,⁴⁸ who, in 1046, issued a set of rules that had been written one year earlier by the Athonite monk Kosmas Tzintziloukes. The emperor himself had appointed Kosmas as a mediator for a new crisis mounted on the Holy Mountain around the interpretation of certain clauses of the *Typikòn* of Tzimiskes, perhaps provoked once again by the more conservative monks.

It has to be remarked that the Italo-Greek *typikà* make authoritative reference to the regulations of Mount Athos, St Sabas and Stoudios, always concerning food provisions or liturgical questions. It is the case of the Sicilian monastery of St Mary of Mili, but especially of the *typikà* of the area around Otranto, where the tradition of Athos is explicitly privileged in the title itself of the *typikòn* of the monastery of St Nicholas of Casole: there, referring to the recitation of Terce (the Third Hour) on Easter Sunday, it is expressly stated that, although the Sabaite rule would be preferable, in the monastery it is mandatory to follow that of Mount Athos.

Holy Italo-Greek monks portrayed at Mount Athos

In the field of hagiology, as is well known, iconology is a documentation fully complementary to hagiography. In fact, iconography does not simply translate hagiographical contents, but effectively demonstrates the spread of a cult. From this point of view, some evidence for the depiction of Italo-Greek monks on the walls of Mount Athos monastic buildings and churches can be found, although it is somewhat disappointing since representations are very few and cannot always be determined and identified with absolute certainty. In only one monastery, the Serbian one of Chiliandari, St Neilos appears in the ranks of the holy monks on the northern wall of the *liti*, and St Phantinos is depicted in the *exonarthex*, also called the '*narthex* of Lazarus'.⁴⁹ This monastery was repainted in 1803, according to the style of the time, including the frescoes in question. But, as can be deduced from the iconography, they were exactly modeled on the original frescoes of the 'Macedonian' school at Thessaloniki: those of the *liti* – by George Kallierges – can be dated to 1320, and those of the *exonarthex* can be dated after 1375–80, when the Serbian prince-martyr Lazar added this building to the *katholikòn*.

The nun Maximi, from the monastery of the Annunciation of Ormylia (in Chalkidiki), is the author of a new edition – with translation into modern Greek and extensive commentary – of the *Lives* of these two

saints.⁵⁰ She recorded and published these two images, but declared she could not find any other image on Mount Athos. Besides, she noted a probable representation of St Neilos in the monastery of St George in Staro-Nagoričane, in Slavic Macedonia, where the saint is portrayed – significantly – next to St Athanasios the Athonite, in a fresco painted between 1316 and 1318 by Michael and Eutychius Astrapades, the famous painters from Thessaloniki. Moreover, the numerical indication of ‘thirty’ (Λ’) next to the figure of St Phantinos is present in the fresco of Chilandari also. This number has been interpreted as an indication of the day of the month (August) when the saint is commemorated, thus making the identification with the Calabrian St Phantinos almost certain. A similar numerical indication is missing – or has not been preserved – in the fresco depicting St Neilos. But in the *litì* is depicted another Neilos spelling, this time St Neilos the Ascetic (erroneously called ‘of Sinai’), a prolific author of spiritual texts and perhaps a disciple of St John Chrysostom, who lived as monk at Ankyra, in Galatia, between the fourth and fifth centuries. This was the saint whose name was assumed by Nicholas of Rossano when he received the monastic habit, so it is quite likely that the second Neilos portrayed there (next to a St Michael who might be St Michael Synkellos) is St Neilos the Calabrian, whose fame – as stated in the passage of his *Life* from which we started – had reached Mount Athos.

Notes

- 1 Leroy 1953, 1963; Papachryssanthou 1975; Ware 1966.
- 2 Morris 1995, 31–63; Papachryssanthou 1975.
- 3 Guillou 1971; Guzzetta 1999, 211–24; Caruso 2004, 55–96; von Falkenhäusen 2009a.
- 4 Guillou 1967, 482–9; Burgarella 2002.
- 5 *Vita Nili iunioris*, XLV, 89.
- 6 Každan 1983, 538–44.
- 7 *Vita Athanasii Athonitae* A, CLVIII, 74; *Vita Athanasii Athonitae* B, XLIII, 176.
- 8 *Vita Athanasii Athonitae* A, CLXI–CLXIV, 77–8; *Vita Athanasii Athonitae* B, XLIII, 177.
- 9 *Vita Athanasii Athonitae* B, XLIII, ll. 24–27, 177.
- 10 *Vita Phantini Iunioris*, XXVIII, l. 1, 432 (Τὸ τριβώνιον ἐκβαλὼν, γυμνὸς ἐν ὄρεσιν ὤχετο); XXVII, l. 17, 432 (γυμνοὶ τῶν ὧδε ἀπάρατε).
- 11 *Vita Athanasii Athonitae* A, CLXI, ll. 20–23, 77; *Vita Athanasii Athonitae* B, XLIII, ll. 36–38, 177.
- 12 *Vita Athanasii Athonitae* B, XLIII, ll. 39–41, 177.
- 13 Follieri 1985, 1–13.
- 14 “È questo uno sprazzo di luce sulla cultura propria del mondo monastico italo-greco anche nelle sue forme più radicali di asceti, e dell’importanza che il libro vi ebbe”: Follieri 1985, 10.
- 15 *Vita Phantini Iunioris*, XXXIX, 446–8.
- 16 *Vita Phantini Iunioris*, XXXIX, ll. 12–13, 448.
- 17 Noret 1976, 389.

- 18 *Vita Phantini iunioris*, 84.
- 19 Papachryssanthou 1975, 66–8; Noret 1976, 387–90.
- 20 *Vita Athanasii Athonitae* A, L, 25; *Vita Athanasii Athonitae* B, XVIII, 144.
- 21 *Typikon of Emperor John Tzimiskes, Greek Text*, 209, l. 2; *English Translation*, 235.
- 22 *Vita Petri Athonitae*, 18–39.
- 23 *Vita Bartholomaei Patirensis*, XXV, 221–2.
- 24 *Vita Bartholomaei Patirensis*, XXVI, 222.
- 25 Hermann 1940, 293–375; Janin 1964.
- 26 Batiffol 1891, 6, n. 4.
- 27 Scaduto 1982, p. 172.
- 28 Minisci 1958, 220.
- 29 Caruso 1999, 51–72; 70–1.
- 30 Pertusi 1963, 217–51.
- 31 Dölger 1948, 278, n° 104, ll. 26–27; Pertusi 1963, 241.
- 32 *Actes de Lavra*, I, n° 57, l. 69, p. 299; Pertusi 1963, 241.
- 33 Smirnakis 1902, 39; Lake 1909, 108; Pertusi 1963, 242.
- 34 *Actes de Lavra*, I, n° 12, l. 29, p. 132; Pertusi 1963, 242.
- 35 *Actes de Lavra*, I, n° 29, l. 23, p. 186; Pertusi 1963, 242.
- 36 *Actes de Lavra*, I, n° 57, l. 68, p. 299; Pertusi 1963, 242.
- 37 Stiernon 1926, cols 198–201; Rigo 1991, 79–119.
- 38 *Ἀσματικὴ ἀκολουθία καὶ ἐγκώμιον τῶν ἐν Ἀγίῳ Ὄρει τοῦ Ἀθῶ διαλαμπάντων Πατέρων*.
- 39 *Memoriale contra Latinos*, 90–1.
- 40 *Opusculum contra Francos*, 62–3; ed. Čičurov, 347.
- 41 Pavlov 1878, 151–3.
- 42 De Meester 1940, 487–506; Manafis 1970; Konidaris 1984; Galatariotou 1987, 77–138; Thiermeyer 1992, 475–513.
- 43 Pertusi 1972, 473–520.
- 44 *Rule of Athanasios the Athonite, Greek Text*, 130–40; *English Translation*, 221–8.
- 45 *Typikon of Athanasios the Athonite, Greek Text*, 102–22; *English Translation*, 250–65.
- 46 *Testament of Athanasios the Athonite, Greek Text*, 123–30; *English Translation*, 274–8.
- 47 *Typikon of Emperor John Tzimiskes, Greek Text*, 209–15; *English Translation*, 235–42.
- 48 *Typikon of Emperor Constantine IX Monomachos, Greek Text*, 224–32; *English Translation*, 284–91.
- 49 Bogdanović, Djurić, Medaković 1978, 84, 86, 88; *Vita Phantini iunioris*, 346.
- 50 Maximi 1991/2002, 77–9; Maximi 1996, 28–9.

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8 Nicholas-Nektarios of Otranto

A Greek monk under Roman obedience

Claudio Schiano

Up until the end of the twelfth century, the history of Greek monasticism in Salento is not very different from that of other areas of the former Byzantine domains under the rule of the Normans. Actually, we do not know any names of local monks or priests whose fame spread abroad, at least throughout all Greek-speaking Southern Italy. This does not mean that there was no cultural life in Salento. The difficulty we face is that no distinctive features help us to identify a properly Salentinian Greek culture: books were copied but we are rarely able to identify them if no explicit information on their provenance is given; as far as we know, very ordinary books circulated, but, basically, none or very few classical ones.¹

At the beginning of the thirteenth century, however, a very interesting personality arises in history: Nicholas-Nektarios of Otranto, who was a Greek monk, a grammar teacher and, later, the abbot of the monastery of St Nicholas at Casole. His education is unknown to us, which is a real pity as the depth of his knowledge strikingly conflicts with the apparent desolation of his cultural context. In the decades following his life, the Terra d'Otranto became one of the most important areas for the transmission of Greek culture in the Italian Middle Ages: poetry (such as very rare Late-Antique epics), philosophy, grammar, and of course theological writings were the basis for a widespread culture which was not confined to Casole any longer.² When, two centuries later, Janus Laskaris came to Apulia in order to procure manuscripts for the Medici's collection, he found a still lively intellectual life among priests and monks in very small and quite isolated towns, such as Montesardo, Corigliano, and Zollino. Over the course of the following pages, we will elucidate how the close and somehow problematic relations that Nicholas-Nektarios entertained with both ecclesiastical and secular power affected the cultural development of his country, since those relations were conditioned by the purpose of defining Greek identity in a period of crisis.

The ecumenical dialogue: Nicholas-Nektarios's silence on the primacy

The main reason for Nicholas-Nektarios's fame consists in his three journeys to the Byzantine Empire (both on its Latin and Greek sides) as a

translator and fellow to Western legates, when he was not yet abbot. For this role he was chosen because of his competence in the two languages, Latin and Greek, and his knowledge of both theological systems. He is himself a source of information about his diplomatic activity, because in the treatise he wrote about the controversial themes that separated the Roman and Byzantine Churches, the *Tria syntagmata*, he spoke about his experience, and his readings and talks, as a fellow of the papal legate, Cardinal Benedict of Santa Susanna, in 1205–07.³ Something really rather odd should not be overlooked: as a Greek monk, he rejected Latin orthodoxy (from the insertion of the *Filioque* in the Creed to the Western permission to shave beards, and so on) and, in his treatise, he constantly addressed the Latins as “brothers” who are wrong. On the other hand, as he was under the jurisdiction of the pope whose primacy he had to admit to, just like the whole Greek-speaking Church of Southern Italy, he was also credited as a loyal and reliable interpreter, who could be useful for the cause of unity. This apparent contradiction is the essence of Greek monasticism in Apulia in the thirteenth century: Nicholas based the definition of his own identity on the underlining of differences beyond the apparent similarities. It is not surprising that, just because of that fluctuating or composite identity, Nicholas was, in the eyes of Cardinal Benedict, the perfect link between the two sides of the Ionian Sea.

The *Tria syntagmata* are not the accurate record of what the legations really said: Nicholas is inspired by those talks, but he rebuilds the architecture of his work, using the literature on the topic without a chronicler’s precision. We are informed about the actual content of those talks by Nicholas Mesarites’s historical account as well, so we can compare the two versions. The main issue of controversy was obviously the pope’s primacy: Mesarites’s account totally focuses on that.⁴ The Greeks were repeating traditional (mainly Photian) arguments against the subordination of the Byzantine Church to Rome,⁵ but, on a political plane, their force was somewhat weaker than at the time of Michael Keroularios. Not even one word about this problem appears in Nicholas-Nektarios’s essay: the reader might guess that such a tricky issue was not even touched during the talks. Moreover, reading Mesarites’s account gives the impression of a less peaceful confrontation than that which Nicholas-Nektarios tends to represent.⁶ Even if we did not have Mesarites’s account, we would be sure of the centrality of that issue in the debate and of the Latins’s aggressiveness just by recalling the letter that Pope Innocent III sent to the new Latin Emperor Baldwin I on 15 May 1205 through Cardinal Benedict. In it, Pope Innocent invited the Emperor to be tolerant towards the Greeks, provided they submitted to papal authority; and, at the very beginning, the pope closely connected the unity of the Church with the submission to the only “*caput et magistrum, quasi Noe archam.*”⁷

One more detail deserves to be noticed. The *Tria syntagmata* are to be dated between 1220 and 1225, according to Hoeck and Loenertz.⁸ That means that, when Nicholas-Nektarios attended to the composition

of this work, he had already taken part in Cardinal Pelagius Galvani's mission to the East (1214–15), which had the same purpose of Cardinal Benedict's, i.e., the union of the Church. How should we interpret Nicholas-Nektarios's silence on this episode? The talks of 1205–07 had failed in their main aim; thus, Pelagius's appointment as head of the new legation had a very different meaning, as he at first used an iron fist against all clerics unwilling to accept papal primacy and even caused a struggle with the Emperor for that reason.⁹ Although he later took a softer stance, Pelagius's attitude towards the usages and beliefs of the Greeks was never inspired by the tolerance Nicholas considered to be the only way to achieve the longed-for union. When the legation arrived at Nicaea and then followed Emperor Theodore I Laskaris to Herakleia Pontike, during what appears as the political phase of the mission, the first theme to be disputed was precisely the primacy of the Roman see.¹⁰

The Latins attacked first with the question: why did Constantinople, which is second and “daughter” after Rome, rudely split off from its “mother”? Mesarites, then bishop of Ephesus, offered quite an interesting answer, even though it does not radically depart from the limits of traditional arguments. If Rome claims its hegemony because of Peter's martyrdom, then a much greater authority should be recognized to the Patriarch of Antioch, because Peter spent much of his teaching career in that city, and even more should be recognized to the Patriarch of Jerusalem, because Jesus Christ himself suffered his Passion there. The actual roots of Roman primacy lay in its being the heart of Empire, even before the evangelic message. When the axis of the Empire moved to the New Rome, the hegemonic role within the Church should have moved, too: “but we know that Constantine the Great assigned an even greater authority to the Church of Rome, when he moved all the symbols of power to this Mighty City (i.e., Constantinople), which was even credited with his name and deemed worthy of the title of queen of the cities.”¹¹

Mesarites's mild speech intended to show that no political insubordination explains the separation of the Byzantine Church from Rome, but only dogmatic issues, such as the procession of the Holy Spirit from both the Father and the Son, or from the Father only. This is the weed contaminating the pure wheat, i.e., “the teaching of the Lord according to the Apostles and the Fathers;” that is why – Mesarites claims – “by necessity we will follow our Church, which keeps on imparting the righteous teaching just as it did before.”¹² The Roman Church, authoritative as to its origin, had departed from the evangelical truth. Whoever reads Nicholas-Nektarios's *Tria syntagmata* finds the same theological approach: Latin and Greek Churches shared the same faith, but in the end the Latins betrayed and abandoned it.

Nicholas-Nektarios's silence on the subject of the primacy in his treatises appears, then, as a subsequent choice breaking out from Mesarites's dialectic pattern.¹³ The following seems to be the first layer of meaning:

the primacy issue is a false one, as the submission of the Byzantine Church to the pope may be accepted, provided that Greek orthodox faith and usages are preserved. However, that does not mean that this issue was of no concern to Nicholas-Nektarios. He did not write about it in his dialectic work against the Latins, but he still kept on thinking and collecting materials about the matter. A more in-depth inquiry is needed.

Studying the primacy issue through canon law

At the end of the first, and surely more challenging, of the two aforementioned missions to the East, in December 1206 Nicholas-Nektarios copied the portion of Theodore Balsamon's commentary to the *Nomocanon* containing the Greek translation of the Donation of Constantine, the forged document upon which the papacy based its supremacy. He did so "in the Great Palace of Constantinople by invitation of Cardinal Benedict," as the subscription declares. Later, he took his copy to Casole, when he returned, and a plentiful amount of copies sprung from it from then on. None of the surviving manuscripts is contemporary to Nicholas, but their circulation testifies to the importance and the long-lasting impact of the cultural operation he enlivened. For instance, the oldest of these manuscripts is *Vat. gr. 1276* (first third of the fourteenth century), a most valuable witness of the poetic production of Salento, along with many other texts. A close scrutiny of its content shows the presence of a curious controversial anti-Latin writing, falsely ascribed to a Nicholas patriarch of Constantinople, and of an anti-Latin poem, falsely ascribed to Michael Psellos. It is not surprising that the first one uses plenty of the arguments and quotations displayed in Nicholas's *Tria syntagmata*; and that its attitude towards the Latins is as mild as Nicholas's, because these are depicted as brothers in need of correction rather than as enemies to be defeated.¹⁴ It is in this context that we find our oldest apograph of Nicholas's transcription of the *Constitutum Constantini*. It is noteworthy that all these materials of Nicholas-Nektarios's collection ended up in a manuscript, *Vat. gr. 1276*, that we should ascribe to the *milieu* of Drosos of Aradeo, a teacher whose interests ranged from Classical philosophy to Greek grammar and rhetoric. This manuscript shows with great clarity its didactic intent: it contains *etymologica*; treatises on poetic meter and grammar; basic catechisms of the Catholic faith, such as John of Damascus's *Expositio fidei*; one of the richest anthologies of the Greek poetry from Salento; and even a short poem in Salentinian dialect but written in Greek alphabet on learning the art of writing.¹⁵ The presence of the extract from the *Constitutum* within such materials is a clear demonstration of the relevance that the issue of the primacy had for the education of a marginal society of monks, priests and lay people, whose identity was straddling two potentially opposite obediences.

We still need to find a fully convincing explanation for Nicholas-Nektarios's silence on that issue. His interest in the *Constitutum* is an important clue, but we do not know how he felt about it. We risk overlaying on him what later generations thought, when the ties with Western Christianity had become increasingly strong, while the Eastern tie was loosening.

For instance, the manuscript *Vat. gr.* 1276 (which is about a century later than Nicholas's autograph) unfortunately lacks the beginning of the *Constitutum* because of the loss of a leaf. In a still later copy, the sixteenth-century *Vat. gr.* 1416, a short preface says that Balsamon "reveals how every church is legitimated by the Roman pope, as may be seen from the testament of Constantine the Great." Were those words – so assertive in believing in the demonstrative strength of that document – written by Nicholas himself?¹⁶ Such belief, indeed, is not rare in the culture of the early thirteenth century, even on the Greek side, and is easy to explain if one just thinks of the instability of the Greek political situation. At the beginning of the sixteenth century, the Salentinian humanist Antonio Galateo reinforces this interpretation when he writes a letter to Pope Julius II and sends him a copy of the *Constitutum*, "that Nicholas of Otranto, man of extraordinary culture for his time, took back from the archives of the Emperors in Constantinople." He claims to have saved it "from the massacre of Otranto, that we cannot remember without crying, when the monastery [of Casole] was devastated and destroyed by the Turks and its library with books of every kind was burnt."¹⁷ For Galateo the Donation is "certain and doubtless": with superficial disdain he discards Lorenzo Valla's demonstration of its falsity and tries to argue for its authenticity by saying that Nicholas of Otranto found the document in the *arcana* of the Byzantine imperial court, where only God's will could have defended it from the destructive blasphemy of the impious Emperors. However, Galateo was writing when the fall of Constantinople had definitely removed one of the two poles of attraction for the Salentinian clergy.

We can doubt that the question was as simple for Nicholas-Nektarios. André Jacob found in the Vatican manuscript *Barb. gr.* 324 (a commentary to the *Nomocanon*, end of the twelfth century) various annotations by Nicholas-Nektarios's hand about many points of canon law.¹⁸ One of them is very important for our purposes. At f. 67v, the manuscript contains Alexios Aristenos's commentary on the very controversial 28th canon of Council of Chalcedon. The canon states that the bishop of Constantinople is "held in equal honor" (*homotimos*) as the bishop of Rome and that the bishops of Pontus, Asia, Thracia and the *barbaroi* should be consecrated by the bishop of Constantinople. Aristenos specifies that the equality is the consequence of the fact that in the New Rome there are the seats of the Senate and of the Emperor; moreover, according to him, the canon implies the statement that the bishops of Macedonia, Illyria,

Thessaly, Attica, and Peloponnesos should be obedient to the bishop of Rome.¹⁹ Nicholas-Nektarios writes, in the outer and lower margin of the page, in Greek and in Latin: “In the 11th Book of the Codex, 21st decision, it is stated: Constantinople will have the privileges not only of Italy, but of the Old Rome itself.” Here Nicholas is drawing on the *Codex Iustiniani* that he knows through the *Basilika* by Leo VI the Wise. While Leo’s Greek text, almost identical to Nicholas’s,²⁰ maintains the ambiguity, the original Latin text doubtlessly clarifies that the law covers the juridical and administrative status of the city, which is not only that of *ius Italicum*, but that of Rome itself, as it is the second capital of the Empire.²¹ Undoubtedly, Nicholas intended the law as regarding the equal ecclesiastical dignity and prerogatives of the bishops of the two cities: not only because of the reference to the problematic 28th canon of Chalcedon, but also because Nicholas translates the Greek *pronomia* (“privileges”) with the Latin *primatum*, a technical term in the discussion on the primacy in the Church.

Nonetheless, this shift from the administrative meaning to the ecclesiastical one is not an error at all. In fact, the *Corpus Iuris Civilis* (section *De sacrosanctis ecclesiis et de rebus et privilegiis earum*) preserves the same law with a more complete formulation: it orders the clergy of Illyria to submit to the jurisdiction of the bishop of Constantinople, whose authority is properly based on the *pronomia* as defined in the *Codex*.²² Thus, when Nicholas reads in Aristenos’s commentary that the *isotimia*, i.e., the balanced authority of the two patriarchs, implies a very narrow jurisdiction for the Constantinopolitan Church, he recalls a disposition that allows thinking to a much wider extent about the power of that Church. This kind of interpretation shows how carefully he meditated on such legal dispositions concerning the respective authority of the pope and the patriarch.²³ Surely, Nicholas had in mind also the debate springing from the aforementioned canon of Chalcedon. The 36th canon of the Council in Trullo (or Quinisext in 692) had confirmed the equal prerogatives but sanctioned that Constantinople was second after Rome; and, later on, the 21st canon of the Council of Constantinople VI (the one that decreed the deposition of the fiercely anti-Roman Patriarch Photius) had again remarked the subordination of Constantinople to Rome: Nicholas noted neither of them down.

The issue of the obedience was truly an uncomfortable one for Nicholas. In the same *Nomocanon* manuscript, he comments on a passage of Aristenos’s commentary about the relation between the bishop and the clergy and quotes a sentence from Jerome in the margin (“Be submissive to your pastor and love him just like the father of your soul”) at f. 92r.²⁴ In this passage, Jerome asks the bishops to remember that they are priests themselves, not lords, so that the hierarchy can be observed with fairness.

The challenging acceptance of the Pope's doctrinal supremacy

At the Third Council of Melfi in 1089, the Greek bishops in Italy had been forced to accept the pope's authority, as a consequence of the Norman conquest; vainly, Basil, ordained bishop of Reggio by the patriarch of Constantinople, had tried to deny obedience to Urban II and eventually fled away from Italy.²⁵ A short period of pacific cohabitation followed and the recognition of papal jurisdiction might have been nothing more than a formal act for decades. The manuscript at Turin, C.III.17, containing the *Typikon* of the monastery of Casole, preserves a letter by the patriarch of Constantinople to Paul, bishop of Gallipoli, in response to his questions about certain liturgical problems.²⁶ If the date 1174 is correct,²⁷ it is noteworthy that, still then, a Greek bishop felt a stronger link to Constantinople than to Rome.²⁸ After that, matters started to get worse. At the end of the twelfth century, under the Popes Celestine III and Innocent III, when Nicholas was becoming a monk, the Roman Church issued various documents condemning the Greek priests who were trying to be ordained by a geographically closer Greek bishop rather than by their ordinary Latin bishop.²⁹

It is easy to understand that accepting the pope's episcopal authority, for Nicholas-Nektarios, was somehow compulsory, especially because the Fourth Crusade had put in serious difficulty the Church of Constantinople, and even the patriarch's theologians had uttered just a few faint arguments against the papal primacy. Nonetheless, he kept on gathering information from the canon law above all, and reflections on the topic: not for his writing *Against the Latins*, that remains moot on that point – *et pour cause!* – but, we should say, for his daily confrontation with the Latin hierarchy. On second thoughts, the work *Against the Latins* itself is a quiet refutation of papal primacy, at least according to a strict interpretation of the term, insofar as it rejects the papal goal of a reduction of the differences, in liturgy and customs, between Greeks and Latins.³⁰

An episode allows us to glimpse a less pacific attitude towards Roman power than we would expect. In 1231, the archbishop of Bari, Marino Filangieri, wrote to Pope Gregory IX and asked him to prohibit baptism with the Greek formula ("Let [X] be baptized" instead of "I baptize you"). At first, the pope accepted Filangieri's point of view, but his rescript caused the uprising of the Greek population. The first Greek delegation failed in its purpose, because it lacked sufficient theological knowledge. The pope required a second, more competent delegation from the *imperium Romaniae*; after hearing this second delegation, however, he changed his mind and declared the tolerability of their formula. Nicholas-Nektarios was the leader of the latter delegation. We know this through a letter of thanks he received from George Bardanes, bishop

of Kerkyra (summer 1232). Here is how Bardanes describes the urgent desire of his own clergy who wanted to be better informed on the events:

How can you stand that we know nothing about Nektarios's travel to the most glorious Rome or about his impetuous strength, inspired by God? He behaved with such braveness and freedom against his adversaries that you would say he was not there to be judged, but to judge and condemn the nasty errors of the heretics. He became a sword; he separated the truth and the lie and flamed as a fire, which will burn those who corrupt the dogmas and light the path to those who come closer to the truth.³¹

What seems remarkable is that news of Nicholas-Nektarios's free assertiveness towards the Roman Curia arrived in Kerkyra other than via Nicholas himself and inflamed the local Greek clergy, so that Nicholas could show up as an "Olympic winner, decorated with many crowns and awards."³² Nicholas's concern was, quite obviously, a very common one, with an extreme potential to rally the crowds in its support.

The political crisis of the Byzantine Empire, the failure of the colloquies for the union of the Churches, the risk of splintering for the Eastern Church itself as a consequence of the competition on the Imperial title: these were all factors that weakened the Greek civilization in front of an increasingly assertive Roman power.³³ The papacies of Innocent III and Gregory IX were marked by an expansion of papal control on every kind of subject, from ethics, to canon law, to the liturgy. The riots at the University of Paris led the pope to issue a bull (*Parens scientiarum*) that inhibited the teaching of Aristotle *de naturali philosophia* by saying: "if you attempt to base faith on reason more than it is permissible, do you not make it vain and useless, as faith has no merit where human reason proves it by test?"³⁴

It is not easy to define precisely what Nicholas-Nektarios felt about the pope's presumption to master the Christian consciences just by exerting despotic power. Of course, his due obedience reduced him to silence, or, at least, forced him to avoid any detailed analysis of the logical foundation of the primacy. However, he was allowed to wonder and write about how to search for truth: on methodological grounds, Aristotelian syllogism was, in his opinion, the most precious inheritance from the Greek thought of the Fathers. Nicholas-Nektarios wrote a text entitled: *Discourse against those who deny the value of culture and allege, by way of excuse, their cautious reverence, although they are just uninitiated and incapable to turn their mind to the study of Greek and profane knowledge; it is here demonstrated, by way of syllogism, that the latter can be very useful, if one attends to it in the proper way.*³⁵ Unfortunately, this work did not pass the test of time: it is, perhaps, one of the most deplorable losses to the Greek culture of Medieval Salento. We know about

it just because, in his journey to Apulia, Janus Laskaris found it in the remote private library of a priest from Corigliano d'Otranto and decided to take down a note about it; otherwise, it would have completely disappeared from our knowledge. Was it too critical or disrespectful of a traditionalist and authoritative culture? We may never know.

The shadow of Frederick II

Nicholas-Nektarios evidently considered his monastery as a bulwark against ignorance and, therefore, defended the practices of worship that were rooted in it. As a grammar teacher, he surrounded himself with students who were not only monks or priests; some of them were laymen of some importance in the society or even in the imperial administration, such as John Grasso, notary of Frederick II, or John's son Nicholas,³⁶ or the notary Andrew of Brindisi. In the light of what we noticed above, it would be tempting to ascribe a Ghibelline spirit to Nicholas-Nektarios, especially if we recall his mission to Nicaea for Frederick II, or if we consider the fiercely Ghibelline accents in many poems of the so-called Nektarios-circle. Disappointingly, we know almost nothing about Nicholas-Nektarios's travels by the Emperor's order (but we may guess they were frequent);³⁷ and, within the "circle," the poet who was most hostile to the Latin Church, George of Gallipoli, may have no actual connection to Nektarios, or, at least, we have no firm hint about that.³⁸

Surely, Nicholas-Nektarios was a realistic and acute man, whose diplomatic skills let him confront the great powers of his time. However, we need to remember that, when the Despotate of Epiros had been reduced to a local power after Klokotnica (1230), John III Doukas Vatatzes, now only pretender to the Imperial throne, had to find allies against the Latin Empire of Byzantium. He had two deeply conflicting alternatives: either to try to induce the pope to interrupt his support to the Latins, by offering the union of the Churches, or to form an alliance with Frederick, whose aim was to contain the papal influence on the international scene. Nicholas-Nektarios's taking part in a delegation sent to Nicaea by Frederick – even as a mere interpreter – could not be meaningless for the Roman Curia. At that moment, it had to seem to be as a treachery. It would be interesting to know if Nicholas kept on serving his emperor also after Frederick was excommunicated (1228);³⁹ on the other hand, this question requires knowing how intense their relationship was and, above all, what Nicholas thought about an excommunication inflicted by the Roman pope for political reasons.⁴⁰ That is exactly what we do not know.

Nicholas-Nektarios's last years

During the last years of his life, Nicholas-Nektarios maintained a critical view of the papacy, guilty of not driving Latin Christianity to the dogmatic purity of the origins and of imposing its beliefs with no sense of

tradition and logic rationality. By his usual prudent dissimulation, some glimpses of this attitude can be grasped. The manuscript Florence, *Laur. Plut.* 5.36 (late thirteenth century) contains a version of the *Tria syntagmata* augmented by supplementary chapters. In this case, the date of composition may be easily ascertained: while discussing the issue of the *Filioque*, the author mentions the Creed engraved in Greek and Latin by Pope Leo III onto two silver shields he saw “with his own eyes” in the Basilica of St Paul (ff. 117v–118r);⁴¹ that happened, as we said before, in 1232. These chapters are, then, among the last things he wrote before he died (1235). The manuscript also contains some pieces that cannot be found elsewhere: remarkably, one on the worship of sacred images. This short text is split into two parts (ff. 111v–113v and 115r–116v), interspersed by the explanation why women should not be allowed to approach the altar.⁴² This shift in content marks that these texts are to be thought of as a set of working notes, copied out in this order by a scribe after some decades, evidently because they had been left in a draft state by the late Nicholas-Nektarios.

The argument that the author alleges to sustain the acceptability of the worship of icons is quite customary: the worship of what bears a mark of the divinity is not veneration or cult, which are to be reserved for the divinity itself. Logic is still the main path of inquiry: “The properties (ιδιότης) of things of different genre and nature (τῶν ἑτερογενῶν καὶ ἑτεροφυῶν) cannot be one and the same (μία καὶ ἡ αὐτὴ), even when we call things synonymously with the same appellation (ὁμωνύμως μὲν τῇ προσηγορίᾳ), as it is the case of the animal and its drawing” (f. 111v). Nicholas-Nektarios quotes testimonies from the Fathers and canonical decrees from the Councils, which confirm his iconodule position. The foremost question we should ask is why Nicholas-Nektarios, in the 1230s, perceives the aversion to the worship of icons with urgent alarm, while the second council of Nicaea (787) should have definitively solved the matter. Nicholas-Nektarios himself provides us with some rather obscure clues: “some of you Latins reject the icons; this issue has been discussed in some synods, as we quickly recalled in the first treatise” (f. 112r); and later on, “let it be said outside this treaty, as we do not want to write so bitterly against anyone; but, because of those who reject the sacred icons, we are going to list some canons from the seventh council” (f. 115r). He does not name his polemical interlocutor, but it is quite clear that he is thinking of an austere and potentially aniconic tendency that was emerging within the Cistercian Order. Bernard of Clairvaux, in his *Apology to William Abbot of St Thierry*, had launched a polemic against Cluniac laxity and, in particular, against the glut of magnificence in the visual apparatus of churches and monasteries: “Just show them a beautiful picture of some saint. The brighter the colors, the saintlier he will appear to them. Men rush to kiss and are invited to contribute: there is more admiration for beauty than veneration for sanctity.” He goes on blaming the floor mosaics depicting saints: “what reverence is shown to

the saints when we walk on them?”⁴³ He considers the excessive use of religious imagery as a distraction of the senses from pure contemplation.

Bernard was the initiator of what some scholars call, somehow inappropriately, “Cistercian iconoclasm.” Actually, in the past centuries there had been Latin theologians, such as Theodulf of Orléans (760–821) and Agobard of Lyons (779–840), who had opposed images, but that happened at the time of the iconoclast struggle, when the Greek side was far from exempt from such theological deviations. Nicholas-Nektarios’s polemics has a much closer referent,⁴⁴ as he seems to say that this error applies only to the Latins. Bernard’s words were very effective: even Abelard, who had little affinity with Bernard, resumed his attack on the superfluity of art, when he pointed out paintings and sculptures as spiritually dangerous.⁴⁵ The decorative richness of Byzantine religious art was very far from Cistercian austerity. Nicholas-Nektarios himself was very keen on religious art: among his poems, we find a praise of the painter Paul of Otranto and two descriptions of icons, one depicting Joseph son of Jacob and the other depicting the two Theodore martyrs.⁴⁶ Such genre was not a rarity in the Salentinian poetic circle: John Grasso wrote an *ekphrasis* of a church decoration, such as that of St Peter in Otranto;⁴⁷ George of Gallipoli wrote about three icons depicting the Annunciation, St George and the Virgin.⁴⁸ These poems often hint at the typological relationship between the image and its transcendent or eschatological meaning; for example, John Grasso’s verses proclaim that “the old-shadow model expresses to me a form (τύπον τυποῖ μοι τῆς σκιᾶς πάλαι τύπος); [. . .] may whoever enters this shrine with divine longing attain the heavenly abodes, mansions towards which all this symbolically looks (πρὸς οὓς τυπικῶς ἀφορᾷ πάντα τάδε).”⁴⁹ Such verses sound like an almost mystical reply to the spiritualist austerity of the Cistercians.

The anti-Latin implications of this issue in Nicholas-Nektarios’s work are no longer surprising when considered in this broader context. But there is something more. Just at the beginning of the short discussion on images, the author says,

When they tempted him, the Lord answered “whose image and inscription is here?” and again “Render to Caesar what is Caesar’s and to God what is God’s” (Mt. 22:21); then, Christ has an image, as he is born among us, and it has a relation with him; if Christ is honorable and even more than honorable, then his image is honorable too.

(f. 111v)

Moreover, immediately after his first allusion to the Latin rejection of icons, Nicholas-Nektarios says,

Now let Peter, the prince of the apostles, be considered first, because he pronounced these words on this subject, as we read in the life

of St Pankratios: “Bring forth our Lord Jesus Christ’s image and impress it on a box, so that all nations may contemplate what kind of aspect he took.”

(f. 112v)

Quoting the controversial ‘Render to Caesar’ after Gregory VII’s *Dictatus Papae* and, furthermore, during the conflict between Frederick II’s caesaropapist tendencies and Innocent III’s reassertion of papal *plenitudo potestatis* over temporal power⁵⁰ could not be either easy or pointless, even though Nicholas-Nektarios apparently stresses a marginal aspect of the quotation.

The second reference is an episode from the *Life of St Pankratios of Taormina*, a text that had a widespread diffusion in Southern Italy, especially in Calabria. The apostle Peter sends Pankratios to Christianize Sicily and provides him with crosses and icons; then he asks the young painter Joseph to decorate a casket with the image of Christ: within this hagiographical narrative, icons become a means to perform miracles.⁵¹ The presence of Peter in this account is remarkable, as he is here the one who is responsible for the use of icons for the Christianization of pagans. The same narrative is told by Theodore of Stoudios and Nikephoros I,⁵² but none of them qualifies Peter as “prince of the apostles” (ὁ κορυφαῖος τῶν ἀποστόλων) in this context, as Nicholas-Nektarios does: that qualification is then meaningful for him and provides us with a hint to recognize the hidden implications of the passage. Also in the debate about the beard, we find that “Saint Peter was at the heart of Nicholas-Nektarios’s comments on men’s head and facial hair and differing attitudes toward it on the part of the ‘Greeks’ and ‘Latins.’”⁵³ Linda Safran explains such attitude by a symbolic use of this character: “Peter had a special connection with Rome [. . .] he could serve as a sign for all things ‘Western.’”⁵⁴ The closest connection – we should remark – remains certainly that with the issue of papal primacy, which is directly based on Peter’s primacy. Then, what does Nicholas-Nektarios intend to say by that? We understand it better if we look, for instance, at the solution he proposes for the issue of icons. The Latin (read Cistercian) “iconoclasm” is out of date – this is his argument – because it has already been forestalled by the canons of the seventh ecumenical council:

This council was held in Nicaea, Bithynia, in the eighth year of Constantine [VI] and his mother Irene’s reign; it was presided over by Pope Hadrian through his intermediaries, the priest Peter and Peter the abbot of St Sabas; also Tarasios archbishop of Constantinople, John, Thomas and George priests of Alexandria, Theodore of Antioch and Elias of Jerusalem came together against the iconomachs.

(f. 115r-v)

The *consensus patriarcharum* is the guarantee that the supremacy of the pope is addressed to the preservation of the true faith and the salvation of

mankind; but, if the pope himself degenerates from the doctrinal heritage still preserved by the other patriarchs, then his primacy loses its obligation. Recalling the Latins to St Peter's teachings or customs helps to point out their present degeneration.

Nicholas-Nektarios was a proud and strong supporter of the cultural identity of the Greek clergy; his intellectual status, rather exceptional at his time and place, lets him serve as a refined intermediary between communities, as long as an agreement was sought. He was subject to the authority of the pope, just like all the Greek monks and priests in Southern Italy, but as the reigning popes increased their despotic control and took advantage of the crisis of the Byzantine Empire and patriarchate to impose a monocratic power, he felt a sense of discomfort and tried to reaffirm the unity of the church founded on the balanced harmony of tradition by means of reason. We have no real evidence about that, but it is not impossible that he saw in Frederick II a tool to achieve this goal. The enrichment of the cultural heritage he transmitted to his fellows and posterity, mainly through the importation of Greek texts from Byzantium, was certainly a central part of this project.

Notes

- 1 We may still rely on what Canart 1978, 151–3, wrote on this point.
- 2 Cf. Jacob 1980; Jacob 1982, 63–4.
- 3 Hoeck and Loenertz 1965, 30–54 and 88–105; Muci 2008.
- 4 Cf. Heisenberg 1923, I, 48–50 (§§ 37–39); 52–63 (§ 41–49).
- 5 Darrouzès 1965, offers a wide range of twelfth-century texts against Roman primacy.
- 6 Heisenberg 1923, I, 13. One may just think of the accusations addressed by Cardinal Benedict against Constantinople as the “origin of all heresies, such as those of Arius, Macedonius, Nestorios, Eutyches and so on;” the Greek monks reacted by recalling the anathematization of Pope Honorius by the VI Council. A quarrel about the manuscript sources for such statement sprang out (*ibid.*, 60–1, § 48).
- 7 *PL* 215, 622–3. Cf. Hussey 2010, 187.
- 8 Cf. Hoeck and Loenertz 1965, 98. The authors assume this chronology because of a short poem written at the end of the *Tria syntagmata* in the Vatican manuscript *Pal. gr.* 232, f. 131v (cf. Gigante 1979, 77–8). Nicholas-Nektarios here puts his *sphragis* and mentions, along with the three books against the Latins, his previous works: the *Spoudomanteia* (on prediction) and the *Dialogue against the Jews*. As the anti-Jewish text can be dated around 1220, the *Tria syntagmata* should be later. Actually, we cannot be sure whether Nicholas-Nektarios composed the poem just when he finished writing the *Syntagmata* or some years later; but, even in the latter case, the chronology does not differ significantly. Nicholas-Nektarios appears to have continued thinking and reworking his treatise: we have two autograph versions and some other later manuscripts transmitting even more revised versions; furthermore, we possess some additions to the *Tria syntagmata* (Hoeck and Loenertz's *Nachträge*), which Nicholas-Nektarios probably intended as the basis for an augmented version of the treatise. At least one of these

additions (ms. *Laur. Plut.* 5.36) can be dated after 1232. In none of these versions or innovations may we find evidence of a frame narrative setting in a period after Cardinal Benedict's mission.

- 9 Cf. Van Tricht 2011, 314; see also Donovan 1950, 16–22.
- 10 Heisenberg 1923, III, 34–35 (§ 34).
- 11 Heisenberg 1923, III, 35, ll. 30–35.
- 12 Heisenberg 1923, III, 36 (§ 35), ll. 12–14.
- 13 Just at the beginning of the account about the mission to Nicaea and Herakleia Pontike, Mesarites (p. 33 § 32) confirms Nicholas-Nektarios's presence, along with an unnamed Spanish priest, Latinophone but expert in Byzantine law (Poncio de Lérida, according to Heisenberg). Mesarites had already announced Nicholas-Nektarios's arrival in Constantinople (20 § 14), with an emphatic peroration of his talents: "Among them, there was also the translator from Italic and Greek languages: he was a long-time acquaintance of mine, as he had served the Cardinal Benedict thanks to his ability in translating from Italian language to Greek with no mistakes and explaining unerringly the words pronounced by both sides." We can be sure that the intellectual exchange between Mesarites and Nicholas-Nektarios was much more intense than it appears in Mesarites' account. In fact, within Mesarites's account about the disputation on unleavened bread, one may find a fragment of the Latin *Ordo Missae* in Greek alphabet with interlinear Greek translation (28 § 24): Chronz 2000, 561–2, convincingly ascribes it to Nicholas-Nektarios because of some peculiarities of his translation technique. Cf. also Hoeck and Loenertz 1965, 82 n. 65.
- 14 Cf. Darrouzès 1970, 223–5. This text does not address the issue of the primacy as well: perhaps because it was not developed in its main source, the *Tria syntagmata*.
- 15 On this manuscript cf. at least Acconcia Longo and Jacob 1980–1982; Arnesano and Sciarra 2010, 442–6.
- 16 This opinion is held by Angelov 2009, 134–7 (edition of the preface at 137).
- 17 Cf. Vecce 1985.
- 18 Jacob 2008, 233 n. 15. The author mentions the existence of the notes at ff. 67v and 92r, but does not analyze them and does not transcribe the second one.
- 19 PG 137, 489–92.
- 20 The Greek text of the law (*Basilika* LIV, 23, 1) can be read in Scheltema and van der Wal 1974, 2516.
- 21 This is a law promulgated by the Emperors Honorius and Theodosios II in 421: "Urbs Constantinopolitana non solum iuris Italici, sed etiam ipsius Romae veteris praerogativa laetetur" (*Codex* XI, 21). Nicholas's Latin text is quite different ("[Urbs Constantinopo]lis non tantum Italie, set et ipsius veteris [Rome habea]t primatum"): this confirms his dependence on the Greek *Basilika*.
- 22 C.I.C. I, 2, 6 (= *Codex Theodosianus* XVI, 2, 45; *Basilika* V, 1, 6): "... urbis Constantinopolitanae, quae Romae veteris praerogativa laetatur."
- 23 He might have benefited by the *expertise* of the Spanish jurisconsult, who "had great competence on the *Tipoukeiton* and the *Digesta*": cf. *supra* n. 13.
- 24 Jerome, *Letters*, 52 (*ad Nepotianum*), 7. This passage of the letter is also quoted by the *Decretum Gratiani* (I, 95, 7), a twelfth-century normative text Nicholas was well informed on. Jerome's abridged text, quoted by Nicholas, is the same as in the *Decretum Gratiani*.
- 25 Cf. Stiernon 1964.
- 26 Cf. Jacob 1987: the author of the letter is, according to André Jacob, Michael III.
- 27 An earlier date for the letter (1074) is proposed by Polidori 2013: in that case, the author should be Kosmas I or Eustratios Garidas. In Delle Donne 2015, one can find arguments against Polidori's proposal.

- 28 In Calabria, the situation was analogous, as Bartholomew of Simeri's or Luke of Isola Capo Rizzuto's looking towards the East shows: cf. von Falkenhausen 2007, 103–4.
- 29 Cf. Quaranta 2004, esp. n. 2.
- 30 In 1112, Pope Paschal II wrote to the Emperor Alexios I Komnenos and asked the Constantinopolitan patriarch to accept papal primacy. He added: "What causes difference in faith or custom between Greeks and Latins cannot be overcome but by the re-composition of the members with the head" (*Epist.* 437, *PL* 163, 389). Thus, the consequence of a complete submission of the Greek clergy to the Roman head would have been the repeal of the disciplinary differences. Or, at least, this was a legitimate fear.
- 31 Hoeck and Loenertz 1965, 194.
- 32 In the second part of the letter, Bardanes speaks by himself, not with the voice of his flock any more, and is more concise: "They will not stop if you do not open your honeyed lips and tell what you discussed, with such great competence, in front of that Supreme Authority, comparable to the Apostles, i.e., the Supreme Pontiff, with all the rest of the church that is there; how you fought the battle you had prefixed, how you filled your path and preserved the faith."
- 33 Bardanes's letter to the patriarch Germanos II (Hoeck and Loenertz 1965, 191–3) reveals anxiety. After the defeat at Klokotnica, the authority of the patriarch was re-established upon the Epirot bishops who had given support to the dynasty of the Komnenos Doukas, Despots of Epiros, against the Nicaean *basileus*. Bardanes's invitation to harmony seems not conventional. In fact, in 1231, Manuel Doukas Angelos had sent Bardanes with a delegation to the Pope Gregory IX, in order to discuss the ecclesiastic submission of the Epirot Church to Rome, with no results.
- 34 Cf. Denifle and Châtelain 1889, 115 nr. 115; Grabmann 1941, 74.
- 35 *Vat. gr.* 1412, f. 80v. Cf. Schiano 2011, 74–7.
- 36 On Nicholas son of John Grasso, cf. Acconcia Longo 1983–1984, 156–7.
- 37 The only source is a letter of Bardanes (Hoeck and Loenertz 1965, 178–9 nr. 3), who just says, "the Kings appreciate the firmness and solidity of your mind and willingly entrust their issues to you."
- 38 Cf. Gigante 1979, 59–66: one of his most aggressive poems is addressed to the Latin priests who assaulted the Greek church of Gallipoli by order of the Latin bishop (p. 174 nr. XI).
- 39 Bardanes's aforementioned letter (nr. 3) has no date; Hoeck and Loenertz 1965, 63, proposed a date around 1223/24, because Bardanes asks Nektarios "what and how deep is the doctrine" of the new patriarch, Germanos II. Therefore, the two scholars assume that the patriarch should have been elected to the throne recently (it happened in 1223), as Bardanes does not know him yet. In my opinion, this proof is weak. Bardanes asks his interlocutor, who has been in the presence of the patriarch, what the atmosphere at the heart of Orthodoxy is: "what is the behavior of that sacred assembly? Do shadows of science and literature survive among the Greeks?" As we do not know if and when Bardanes personally met Germanos II, those questions remain reasonable, even years after the accession. Moreover, at the beginning of the letter, Bardanes hints at Nicholas-Nektarios's *senectus*.
- 40 However, this excommunication was already canceled a few years later, in 1230; and, even before that, Frederick II's panegyrists still greeted him as a new David despite the excommunication.
- 41 Cf. Peri 2002. Here, Nicholas-Nektarios is translating from Peter Damian's *Opusc.* 38 (*PL* 145, 635), who wrongly ascribes the mention of Leo III's

- shield to Augustine: Nicholas, then, adds his own experience to strengthen the Father's words.
- 42 This text is also in the last leaf of the autograph in the Vatican manuscript, *Pal. gr.* 232 (f. 132): the hand is still Nicholas-Nektarios's, but the leaf is a later addition to the manuscript.
 - 43 Bernard of Clairvaux, *Apologia ad Guillelmum Abbatem* 12, 28. Cf. Talbot 1986; Reilly 2011.
 - 44 Frederick II's protection of the Cistercians is well known: cf. Kölzer 1994.
 - 45 Abelard, *Epistula* 8 (*PL* 178, 302).
 - 46 Gigante 1979, 77, 82–3 (nrr. 10, 22–23).
 - 47 Cf. Safran 1990.
 - 48 Gigante 1979, 166–7, 181 (nrr. 2–3, 15).
 - 49 Gigante 1979, 104 (nr. 2); English translation by Safran 1990, 426.
 - 50 Jesus Christ's words, "Render to Caesar . . .," had already been used by the partisans of the Imperial power in the twelfth century, as we can read in Godfrey of Viterbo's chronicle (cf. Muratori 1725, 360). Frederick II repeated them in his oath at the enthronement ceremony.
 - 51 Cf. Stallman-Pacitti 1986. The work was written around 700: this explains the recurrent references to the cult of the icons.
 - 52 Theodore of Stoudios, *Epistulae* 221, l. 103; Nikephoros I, *Refutatio et ever-sio definitionis synodalis anni 815*, 83.
 - 53 Safran 2014, 81. According to Nicholas-Nektarios, Latins imposed cutting the beard as a sign of respect for the founder of their Church, Peter, who suffered the violence of a wicked person and had his beard torn out.
 - 54 *Ibid.*, 82. This peculiar connection is even strengthened by the fact that "this polemic is not present in paint," as we cannot clearly distinguish a Greek feature of representing a bearded Peter and a Roman feature of a shaved Peter. Cf. also Menna 2001; and, for a different geographical area but with interesting general observations, Higgitt 1989.

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Part II

The *Life of St Neilos*



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9 Neighbors

Jews and Judaism in the *Life* of *St Neilos* the Younger

Giancarlo Lacerenza

It is well known that the Greek *Life* of St Neilos of Rossano, or the Younger (Rossano Calabro ca. 910 – Tusculum or Grottaferrata 1004), differs from other hagiographical texts of the High Middle Ages in its attention to some realistic details, including those on the Jewish presence in Northern Calabria.¹ In the general economy of the *Bios*, Jews and Judaism are, moreover, a rather recurring theme, probably to an extent that one would not expect in a text apparently not dealing directly with polemics or apologetics. These latter strands, of course, are by no means lacking in the text, but they would seem insufficient to consider the *Vita Nili* as an anti-Jewish pamphlet.² As for the sources, despite various amplifications, *exempla* and narratives certainly introduced by the anonymous hagiographer, his need to enrich the literary texture of his work does not obscure the lower stratum of materials probably originating from Neilos's own experience and direct accounts.³

The passages of the *Bios* concerning the Jews have been already discussed various times from different points of view.⁴ More specifically, Jews or references to Judaism appear in four or five different places of the text, in the following order:

- 1) *Bios* §§ 35–36, p. 81: the episode of the murder of a Jew in Bisignano. A young gentile avoids capture after having killed a Jew returning home from his trade (*ἀπὸ πραγματείας*); his father-in-law is imprisoned and the local judges consign him to the Jews to be crucified. Presumably on being asked for intercession by the relatives of this man, Neilos sends a letter to the judges of Bisignano through the hands of the old monk Georgios, declaring that Georgios would offer his own life in place of that of the sentenced man. As soon as he is informed of the contents of the letter, the monk – illiterate and up to that moment totally unaware of Neilos's intentions – willingly accepts his fate in observance of his master's desire. Impressed by Neilos's arguments as well as by the behavior of his disciple, the judges renounce killing him, setting the imprisoned man free and

highly honoring the monk. The narrative stops here and it is not said whether the family of the murdered Jew ever obtained justice.

- 2) *Bios* § 50, pp. 93–94: the meeting in Rossano between Neilos and the Jewish physician Donnolo (Šabbetai ben Avraham, Oria 913 – Rossano? not before 982). It is stated that, despite the fact that Donnolo was renowned for his skills in medicine and that Neilos was ill and had known the Jew from his youth, the sick saint refused the medicine (φάρμακον) offered by Donnolo to alleviate the debility provoked by his ascetic practices.
- 3) *Bios* § 51, p. 94: immediately following the preceding meeting, there is a short conversation between Neilos, Donnolo and another unidentified Jew, a friend of the latter. The point of the episode is not completely clear: Donnolo's friend asks the saint to speak about the nature of God, but the monk refuses, inviting instead the two Jews to his hermitage in order to study the Bible together for a while. After the refusal of the Jews, Neilos compares their behavior to the conduct of those ancient Jews who believed in Jesus, but refused to follow him to avoid being banned from the synagogue.
- 4) *Bios* § 53–57, pp. 95–99: some paragraphs concerning the intercourse of Neilos with the imperial and depraved judge Eupraxios and his final repentance. The episode is quite long and towards the end there is again, for the last time, the presence of Donnolo (§ 56, p. 98). The narrative deals chiefly with the last stage of the difficult relationship between Neilos and Eupraxios, when the latter, seriously sick and without any relief from medicine, addressed himself to the saint. After three years of sufferings, he was eventually granted the right to be tonsured and died as a good Christian. Donnolo is quoted as a witness of Eupraxios's conversion, which is evidently considered to be a miracle.
- 5) *Bios* §§ 77–78, pp. 116–117: the discourse addressed to the Montecassino monks, belonging to a later stage of Neilos's life. Although not explicitly dealing with his various encounters with the Jews, the saint expresses his contempt of the Jews in wider terms, defining them through the traditional lexicon of Christian anti-Jewish denigration, such as killers of God, miserable and infidels (θεοκτόνοι, ταπεινοί, ἄσεβεις).

Excepting no. 5, it appears undeniable that the *Life* of Neilos deals with the Jews in a somewhat fresh fashion, if compared with the standardized treatment in similar more or less contemporary sources, both in Latin and Greek.⁵ The reason for this originality lies, first of all, in the exceptional personality of Neilos, who was not a distant figure of a holy man, but a contemporary of his biographer, who gleaned his information from first-hand materials. Given this premise, in the various references to the

Jews occurring in the *Bios*, it is not hard to detect three main areas of interest concerning the interaction of the saint with the Jews:

- a) the participation of Neilos in events involving Jews and related to his stay in Calabria (1, 4);
- b) a criticism of medicine, through the figure of the physician Šabbēṭay Donnolo (2, 4);
- c) Neilos's overall approach to Jews and Judaism (1, 3, 5).

It is by no means certain that all these references can be read simply as *exempla*. Here and there, it seems hard to recognize such an intention (see, for instance, the ambiguous results of episode no. 3). The various occurrences of Jews in those pages of the *Bios* devoted to the period spent by Neilos in Northern Calabria, where he lived about thirty years (ca. 951–982) after the abandonment of his cave at the Merkourion,⁶ can be simply or at least partially explained with the fact that the Jews were, for centuries, part of the human landscape in Calabria and so it was impossible to ignore them: their presence was deeply-rooted there at least from the late Roman age, as is proved by some epigraphic and archaeological finds, including the unexpected remains of a synagogue.⁷ It appears that, at least there, the recent conversion campaigns promoted by the Byzantines were not very successful, and this could partially explain the recurring, negative presence of the Jews in this source.⁸

According to the above, it would seem that, chronologically, the first occurrence of Jews recorded in the biography of the saint was the episode of the murder of the Jew in Bisignano (no. 1). However, this is not the case: indeed, in the first episode in which Donnolo appears (no. 2), it is said that Neilos had known the Jewish physician since his youth: therefore, presumably, they had met in Rossano before 940, which takes us back some decades before.⁹ Maybe Donnolo was, in that period, a young wandering scholar, eager to catch anything either from erudite knowledge or practical skills. We know this from Donnolo's autobiographical notes included in the preface of his work entitled *Sefer Ḥakmoni*.¹⁰ There he states that he left his homeland in Salento in the year 925, at the age of 12, enslaved by the Saracens. After his rescue, it is not known whether he ever went back to Oria – it is possible that he never returned, while on the other hand it is certain that he traveled for some time in the Byzantine territories in Southern Italy, eventually settling, as is fairly certain, in Rossano itself.¹¹

The *Life* of Neilos does not provide us with any details on the degree of acquaintance between the rich scion of respected local dignitaries, and the young Jew and former slave Donnolo, *vel* Šabbēṭay. The latter was, however, a rather peculiar Jew: skilled in biblical exegesis, and possibly a member of a family of very learned men,¹² he was openly interested in

all kinds of sciences, both physical and mechanical, and fascinated by astronomy, chemistry, mathematics and philosophy.¹³ As he wrote about himself, with reference to the years of his youth and early wandering in South Italy:

I looked at all the works that my hands had made, and the labor that I had spent to accomplish them (Qohelet 2:11a), for there was no practical work seen by my eyes that my hands had not made. *But all was vain and the pursuit of wind; and without value under the sun* (Qohelet 2:11b). *And I (also) saw that there is more value in wisdom than in folly, as light is better than darkness* (Qohelet 2:13) . . . Then I worked hard to learn and understand the science of medicine and the science of the stars and constellations.¹⁴

It is unlikely that, in a town like Rossano, such a character would not have been in touch with Neilos, described in the *Life* as a mind of exceptional intellect, voracious in learning, who, as the *Bios* admits (§ 2), also possessed books with *φυλακτά* and *ἐξορκισμοί*: i.e., handbooks or collections of spells and formulae of exorcism in his library. A common interest in the supernatural is not at all surprising for that period and context, and probably it would have offered a common ground of understanding between Neilos and Donnolo, who was the bearer of an ‘alien’ knowledge and to whom the investigation into the secrets of Creation was daily bread.¹⁵ On the other hand, topics that could be explored as licit and as a part of normal philosophical and also ‘scientific’ investigation in Judaism, would have easily been labeled prohibited knowledge among Christians.¹⁶ Although the exact meaning of *φυλακτά* and *ἐξορκισμοί* remains unclear, it should not be underestimated that these words, as used in Byzantine texts, appear to designate texts forbidden by the Church from the seventh century onwards, as Burgarella has suggested.¹⁷ We also find them used with this specific referent in the *Procheiros nomos*, a text that brings us directly to tenth-century Northern Calabria. At the end of Neilos’s lay experience, when he was still married and suddenly fell ill, affected by a long-lasting high fever, it is possible that Donnolo would have been called as physician to assist him: unless the whole report of this illness is merely a *topos*.¹⁸ Anyway, gradually the two would follow very different roads and eventually they would ‘officially’ meet again only decades later, as shall be seen further on.

When the Jews appear explicitly for the first time in the *Bios* (no. 1), the climate is totally different. Neilos was already a respected monk and the scene takes place around 960 in Bisignano, a city that was also the homeland of the wise Proclos, one of his first disciples. As has always been noted, the episode of the Bisignano murder and subsequent trial contains at least two problematic elements, both of a juridical nature, contrasting with the general tendency to realism characterizing the *Life*. The first is

the sentence of crucifixion allegedly declared by the local judges, who also deliver the sentenced man to the Jews for the execution to be carried out. Since capital punishment by crucifixion was out of the question in that period, it has been presumed that this element was introduced for its symbolic nature.¹⁹ It has remained unexplained, however, how the author of the *Bios* could claim to be reliable on this point. Certainly, the image of the Jews crucifying an innocent Christian man is a powerful means to instill anti-Semitic sentiment in the readers (should they need any). Lexically, there is no possibility of misunderstanding, given that the hagiographer uses precisely the verb σταυρώω, ‘to crucify’²⁰ – the same verb used in the New Testament for the death penalty of Jesus – and avoids the juridical term ἀνασκολοπίζω, used after Constantine’s abolishment of crucifixion to stress the different way of hanging those sentenced to death. If the incident had ever taken place, this second kind of execution (in Latin called *furca*) would have been the historically correct one.²¹

Furthermore, the author places a tendentious error when quoting the letter addressed by Neilos to the Bisignano judges in order to stop the execution:

It is necessary for you who know the law (τὸν νόμον) to rule in accordance with it, for it commands judges to execute one Christian for seven Hebrews. Therefore, either let six other Hebrews be given over for execution for the man about to be crucified, or, if indeed it seems best to you to disregard those laws which were so wisely laid down, let he whom I am sending with this letter, a scion of one of the first families of Rossano, be handed over to the Jews to be crucified. And let the poor fellow go free.²²

‘One Christian for seven Hebrews’ (ἓνα χριστιανὸν ἀντὶ ἑπτὰ Ἰουδαίων) is presented as a legal parameter that, however, is otherwise unknown and does not appear in any ancient or Byzantine law that has come down to us. It is absent in the already mentioned *Procheiros nomos* and its principle has nothing to do with the *lex talionis*. The only possible conclusion is, for the moment, that we have here another rhetorical redundancy introduced by the anonymous biographer, to stress the difference of value between Jews and Christians.²³ Of course, other explanations are quite possible. For instance, given the undeniable biblical flavor of the sentence – and the fact that the number seven is one of the multiples most used in the Bible – *Genesis* 4:15, ‘Anyone who kills Cain shall suffer seven acts of vengeance’ (πᾶς ὁ ἀποκτείνας Καὶν ἑπτὰ ἐκδικούμενα παραλύσει), has been considered its source.²⁴ However, given the substantial symbolic relevance of Cain, this seems unlikely. Looking for a biblical antecedent for this reprisal, perhaps *Leviticus* 26:28, where God is saying against Israel, ‘I will chastise you seven times in accordance with your sins’ (καὶ παιδεύσω ὑμᾶς ἐγὼ ἑπτὰκις κατὰ τὰς ἁμαρτίας ὑμῶν),

could be more convincingly taken into consideration. Moreover, there is yet another biblical narrative that closely recalls this episode: it is 2 *Samuel* (LXX 2 *Kings*) 21:1–9, where David grants vengeance to the Gabaonites – previously persecuted by Saul – turning over to them seven sons of Saul (actually, nephews) to be hanged (ἐξηλιάζω) in revenge:

³And David said to the Gabaonites: “What shall I do for you? And how shall I make atonement and you will bless the inheritance of the Lord?”⁴And the Gabaonites answered: . . . “Consign to us seven men from his sons (δότη ἡμῖν ἑπτὰ ἄνδρας ἐκ τῶν υἱῶν αὐτοῦ) and let us hang them in the sun (καὶ ἐξηλιάσωμεν αὐτοὺς) to the Lord in Gabaon of Saul, as elect ones of the Lord.’ And the king said, “I will give.”

Despite some obvious differences in detail, considering the whole narrative – which cannot be reported here *in extenso* – and its structure, the dynamics of revenge appear the same, as well as the outcome: seven men must be hanged, rather than just one, in order to vindicate the collective persecution of the Gabaonites, who were not ‘Hebrews’.²⁵ Finally, to corroborate the undoubtedly biblical source for this otherwise unknown law, serious attention should be paid to a reading very popular in Neilos’s entourage, the book of Psalms, where the same image depicted by the hagiographer can be found. *Psalms* 79 (LXX 78):11–12 deals specifically with the deliverance of a convicted man and the restitution of the evil seven times (ἐπταπλασίῳ) to his ‘neighbors’ (γείτονες):

¹¹Let the sigh of the prisoners come in before you: for to the greatness of your arm preserve the sons of the slain ones. ¹²*Repay our neighbors sevenfold, into their bosom*, of their reproach with which they have reproached thee, o Lord.²⁶ [my translation]

Is ‘Repay our neighbors sevenfold’, the ‘law’ cited by Neilos, or fabricated by the hagiographer, by any chance the same as the policy towards the wicked “neighbors” (the Jews) that can be inferred from various allusions to the Bible? At any rate, the true hero of the episode is not so much Neilos as the monk Georgios; and it is maybe of some significance that the anecdote is inserted in the various paragraphs of the *Bios* devoted to his personality, so that one may ultimately think – considered that the anonymous biographer was poorly informed about these early years of Neilos’s life – that the anomalous narrative of the Bisignano murder has been borrowed from another source, still unknown to us.

We are then introduced to various passages mentioning or directly involving Šabbetay Donnolo, who is depicted by Neilos’s biographer as a significant Jewish personality in Byzantine Calabria. In the first occurrence (no. 2), the Jewish physician meets Neilos in Rossano, where the

aged monk, who was rather unwell in that period, had been put to the test by a number of priests, clerics and civil authorities led by the Metropolitan Theophylactos and the *doméstikos* Leo, apparently in order to ascertain his orthodoxy and knowledge of the Scriptures. The discussion was public and took place near the extra-urban church of St John the Baptist.²⁷ The day after, back in Rossano, Neilos received the visit of Donnolo who was in the company of another Jew, maybe a friend or one of his disciples. Having heard of the severe physical discipline practiced by the monk, Donnolo, evidently informed that Neilos was not well, offered him a medicinal remedy to strengthen his body. His words were, according to the hagiographer:

I have heard of your asceticism and your extreme abstinence, and knowing what your physical condition is, I have marveled that you do not fall into an epileptic fit. However, with your permission, I will give you a remedy for your condition to use through the rest of your life, thus freeing you of illness.²⁸

Donnolo's intentions appear sincere from this text, but it is also possible that he was sent there on request of one of the dignitaries who met Neilos the day before. In any case, the meeting is used by the hagiographer to stress Neilos's disdain for medicine, as well as his ethics and theological approach to Judaism. Neilos indeed proudly refuses the *φάρμακον* offered by Donnolo, opposing the classical argument, again extracted from the Psalms: 'It is better to trust in the Lord than to trust in man' (118:8, LXX: ἀγαθὸν πεποιθέναί ἐπὶ κύριον ἢ πεποιθέναί ἐπ' ἄνθρωπον):

The great man replied, "One of you Hebrews [i.e., David] has told us: 'Better is it to trust in the Lord than to trust in man.' The physician in whom we trust is our God and Lord Jesus Christ. Thus we have no need of your remedies, and this will deprive you of the opportunity to delude simple-minded Christians by boasting that you provided remedies for Neilos." The physician listened to this, but made no reply to the saint.²⁹

The *topos* of faith in Jesus curing better than any medicine is by no means original and just shows that Neilos – assuming that his biographer is trustworthy on this point – followed the traditional polemical approach towards the *ars medica*, particularly popular in hagiographies between the ninth and eleventh centuries but not unknown before, even in texts from Southern Italy.³⁰ Neilos displayed the same attitude even earlier – which happened, according to the *Bios*, many times – when he was called to perform exorcisms, following the principle and providing justification for his acts, that it was God who granted deliverance from demons, not himself.³¹ But it cannot be denied that his words also suggest the fear of

losing prestige if cured by a common physician and, what is more, by a Jew.

The narrative continues with the attempt made by Donnolo's companion to entertain a theological conversation with the monk concerning God. Such a request is perhaps not so surprising: besides the documented interest of South Italian Jewry, in the High Middle Ages, in classical and post-classical secular literature in Latin and Greek – for instance, the *Aeneid* and the *Alexander Romance* – in the same period a new interest flourished with respect to the Jewish literary heritage discarded by the rabbinic movement, but preserved for centuries in Christian hands, such as Josephus and non-canonical biblical texts like *Judith* and *Maccabees*, never included in the Jewish canon but of some relevance for the emerging interest in Jewish history and memory.³² Therefore, the question asked by the anonymous Jew could be seen in this context, though presented with a nuance of naturalness or ingenuity. However, Neilos's ideas about God's greatness and incommensurability were not at all similar to those expressed by Donnolo in his works, in contrast to what has been suggested by other scholars.³³

Neilos easily opposes the request from the two enquirers, once again, if not by responding with an immediate denial, yet providing an almost insurmountable condition for a Jew: that he spend some time in the hermitage in his company. Such a move would obviously have been condemned as a pure act of apostasy by the Rossano Jews, as one of them explicitly avows:

'Your request, o Jew, is comparable to commanding a baby to grasp the top of a tree and bend it to the ground. Nevertheless, if you wish to hear something on the subject, take your prophets and Law, and come with me into the desert whither I retire. And after you have spent in reading as many days as Moses did on the mount, then ask and I shall answer you. . .'

Both answered at the same time, "That we cannot do lest we be excommunicated and stoned by our co-religionists."³⁴

In his translation, Starr omits a significant comment from the monk: 'Should I speak of God to you now, it would be like writing on the water and sowing seed on the sea' (καθ' ὕδατος γράφω, καὶ ἐπὶ θάλασσαν σπερῶ). Making use of two idiomatic expressions of classical origin,³⁵ namely that the Jew would not understand his words without studying the Bible with him, sounds almost like an insult, assuming that the Jew – probably with some literacy skills, being in the company of one of the finest scholars of his time – did not know Scripture or comprehend it in the proper way. Moreover, Neilos's answer seems to make reference not to a study of the Bible in general terms, but precisely to the Hebrew Bible,

as is suggested by the phrase 'bring with you the Prophets with the Law' (τοὺς Προφήτας μετὰ τοῦ Νόμου), i.e., the Hebrew Scriptures according to their traditional designation from a Christian perspective.³⁶ Therefore, the text suggests that discussing religion with the Jews, even on the same grounds, is useless.³⁷

The short dialogue between Neilos and his Jewish guests is usually presented and commented in isolation from its context, but it cannot be fully appreciated without remarking the very different treatment reserved by Neilos to the clerics who had visited and tested him the day before, patiently answering them, though he was well aware that they too were deliberately asking ἀπόρητα, abstruse or insoluble, trick questions.³⁸ A double standard was then set by Neilos. It seems that the refusal of the two Jews to follow the monk in his 'desert' disappointed the monk (or his biographer), who maybe wished to gain at least one soul for Christianity: as Neilos concludes, tracing an analogy between the two Jewish visitors and those ancient Jews who believed in Christ, but who chose not to follow him, fearful of the Pharisees's reaction.³⁹ By the way, also in this case a slight legal exaggeration is introduced, evoking a Judaic 'stoning' (λιθοβολέω) for the alleged apostates, where excommunication would have been the expected penalty.⁴⁰

Despite the double defeat, not even at this point does Donnolo disappear from Neilos's horizon forever, but he reappears, apparently only a short time after the previously-described events, not in direct relationship with the saint himself, but nonetheless in rather exceptional circumstances. The crowning of Neilos's stay in Rossano in the years 965–970 is, in fact, represented by the ceremony of tonsure of Eupraxios, apparently conceded *in articulo mortis*, as he had been suffering from a carcinoma in the lower parts of his body for a long time (no. 4). Though never explicitly stated, it is clear enough that this sickness was a divine punishment for improper sexual habits. It is worth remembering that Eupraxios was not a secondary figure among the Byzantine dignitaries in South Italy: on the contrary, as a κριτής, he was the highest civil authority of the two Byzantine *themata* of Longobardia and Calabria.⁴¹ Accordingly, when he was tonsured by Neilos and covered by him in coarse clothes of wool, this happened at the presence of Stephen, Metropolitan of Santa Severina, the bishop of Rossano, as well as of many abbots and priests. Despite being performed at the house of the dying judge, the ceremony could hardly have been as humble as suggested by the hagiographer.

In such a high clerical context, it is rather strange to find the Jew Donnolo attending the tonsure ceremony. On this point, however, the text supplies a straightforward explanation, specifying that Donnolo was there 'as a physician' (ὡς ἰατρός), and this would support the hypothesis that he was in fact, if not the favorite, at least one of the personal physicians of

the judge Eupraxios. But the text goes further, and an admiring testimony on what he had seen is attributed to Donnolo himself:

On his way out he expressed his surprise at what had taken place to those present, ‘Today I have witnessed a remarkable feat such as we hear of from olden times, for I have seen the prophet Daniel tame the lions (ἡμεροῦντα τοὺς λέοντας). For who has ever dared to lay hands on this lion? [*scil.* Eupraxios] Yet this latter-day Daniel [*scil.* Neilos] has cut off his mane and put a cowl over him’.⁴²

Even allowing for the supposition that these words were effectively pronounced by him, there is no reference in Donnolo’s enthusiastic assertion, as sometimes has been argued, to the power of faith surpassing the power of medicine: the text never says, indeed, that Eupraxios was healed by Neilos, but just that after his tonsure he felt better for some days, then he died.

More interesting is, maybe, the source of Donnolo’s statement. According to Dan. 6:23 (both Hebrew and Septuagint), Daniel did not ‘tame’ the lions as is hinted in the *Life* (the predicate used is ἡμερώω); in the biblical text, he was just saved because an angel of the Lord stopped the lion’s mouth (ἀπέστειλεν τὸν ἄγγελον αὐτοῦ καὶ ἐνέφραξεν τὰ στόματα τῶν λεόντων). The image of Daniel taming or domesticating the lions belongs rather to the midrashic tradition,⁴³ and this is perhaps what Donnolo had in mind. It seems that Neilos’s biographer was aiming to reinforce the portrait of Donnolo as an admirer of Neilos by choosing this anecdote, as also previously suggested in the text. In some way, paradoxically, he calls on the Jew to give testimony of Neilos’s greatness.⁴⁴

The last references to the Jews in Neilos’s *Life* can be found in the latter part of the text, in the dialogues he entertained with the monks of Montecassino. Dealing with the problem of fasting on Saturdays or Sundays, Neilos observes (§ 77, p. 116) that if the miserable Jews (οἱ ταπεινοὶ Ἰουδαῖοι) converted, he would not mind if they fasted every Sunday. This passage shows, though rather briefly, that Neilos was not indifferent to the trend towards conversion of the period: despite the fact that, as has been already noted, there is no explicit mention of any attempt to convert even just Donnolo to Christianity,⁴⁵ as has been shown in episode no. 3, Donnolo and his friend felt insecure about Neilos’s intentions on proposing a period of study in his hermitage.⁴⁶

Further on in the same discourses (§ 78, pp. 116–17), dealing with what could be done or not on a Saturday, Neilos singles out Jews and Manicheans to make his argument:

And rightly we do not fast on Saturday, not to be as the dreadful Manicheans, who mourn on Saturday, refusing the Bible as not given

by God. At the same time, we don't refuse to work (on Saturday) not to be like the God-killers and impious Jews.

(ἵνα μὴ ἐξομοιωθῶμεν τοῖς θεοκτόνοις καὶ ἀσεβέσιν Ἰουδαίοις)

There is no trace of originality in this sequel of adjectives, which all belong to the old *Contra Iudaeos* tradition, certainly well-known and shared in Neilos's original territories in the South. In the Lombard area, however, behavior towards the Jews was slightly more favorable compared to the Byzantine territories, where the Jewish population was also subject to a number of restrictions not yet introduced elsewhere.⁴⁷

Summing up, the presence of various real or at least realistic materials concerning the Jews in the *Life* can be substantially confirmed, as well its underlying anti-Judaic features. At the same time, while Neilos's alleged sympathy towards Donnolo fails to be proven, his biographer seems unable to hide the prominence of the Jewish 'neighbors', implicitly bearing witness to the defeat of the Byzantine repressions in South Italy, where Jewish cultural and economic growth would still continue flourishing for centuries.

Notes

- 1 von Falkenhausen 1989; von Falkenhausen 2012b, 883–4. As is known, the late Enrica Follieri had prepared a new critical edition of the text, announced more than once (see for instance Follieri 1997–99) which, unfortunately, never saw the light. In this article, all quotations from the *Bios* follow the Greek text in Giovanelli 1972 (sections marked by §, followed by the corresponding pages).
- 2 See Burgarella 2013, 50.
- 3 The traditional attribution of the *Bios* to St Bartholomew the Younger, who was also a disciple of Neilos, has been seriously questioned on linguistic grounds by E. Follieri in the course of a congress held in 1998, whose acts are unfortunately still unpublished; her views and observations are, however, presented in Luzzi 2004, 177–80.
- 4 von Falkenhausen 1989; Colafemmina 1989; Luzzati Laganà 1996; Luzzati Laganà 2004; Kohen 2007, 87–90; Aulisa 2009, 281–92; Mancuso 2010, 15–21; Burgarella 2013; von Falkenhausen 2013, 291–3.
- 5 This point has been noted various times: for all, see von Falkenhausen 1989; von Falkenhausen 1996, 36–9.
- 6 On the eparchy of Merkourion, see Burgarella 2002.
- 7 Colafemmina 2012, 1–11; von Falkenhausen 2013; Lacerenza 2013, 413.
- 8 So Skinner 2007, 4–5.
- 9 On the acquaintanceship, if not friendship, between Donnolo and Neilos in those years, a full comment can be found in Luzzati Laganà 2004, 82–8. Years ago Skinner (1997, 92 note 81) refused the identification of Donnolo from Oria as the Jewish physician of Rossano described in the *Bios*, but it seems that subsequently she changed her opinion (Skinner 2007, 4).
- 10 Lacerenza 2004; Mancuso 2010, 222–35.
- 11 Although there is no positive proof of Donnolo's settlement in Rossano, this point seems to emerge from a number of hints, on which see von Falkenhausen

- 1989, 284; Colafemmina 1989, 120; Fiaccadori 1992, 214–5; Lacerenza 2004, 54–5.
- 12 The ancestry of Donnolo has been discussed several times but there is no agreement on the status and identity of his forefathers. In the *Life* he is said to be ‘very expert of the Law’ (σφόδρα νομομαθής: *Bios*, § 50, p. 93), however this cannot be translated as ‘highly cultured,’ as in Starr 1939, 162, as well as in other literature. This interpretation originates from the reading σφόδρα φιλομαθῆ, that can be found in Migne (PG 120, col. 92D, translated as *admodum studiosus* in the Latin version), while in the Giovanelli edition νομομαθῆ is found. Strangely, Giovanelli’s translation (‘highly renowned’) is still based on φιλομαθῆ.
 - 13 For the technical and ‘practical’ interests of Donnolo, Ieraci Bio 1989, 452; Lacerenza and Whitehouse 2004.
 - 14 My translation from the Hebrew text in Mancuso 2010, 128.
 - 15 On Donnolo’s interests in this area, although documented mainly from texts written in his maturity, for a first approach see Sermoneta 1980; Wolfson 1992.
 - 16 This passage of the *Bios* has been commented many times and various readers (for instance Giovanelli 1966, 122–3, note 10) have tried to deny what the text, instead, claims quite clearly. On the meaning of the two terms in this context, see rather Pertusi 1983, 21–3 (although there is no need to imagine that Donnolo and Neilos associated in Rossano within a ‘philosophical-scientific circle with necromantic interests’); Burgarella 1987, 31, note 28; Luzzati Laganà 1996, 719; Luzzati Laganà 2004, 97–8; as well as the comprehensive comment from Lucà 2007: 67–72.
 - 17 Burgarella 1987, 30–1, n. 28; Burgarella 2013, 53, 61.
 - 18 See Luzzi 2004, 181–2, n. 30, interpreting this illness as a symbolic element introduced by the hagiographer.
 - 19 Colafemmina 1989.
 - 20 *Bios* § 35, p. 81: τότε πραττόντων παραδίεται τοῖς Ἰουδαίοις τοῦ σταυρωθῆναι ἀντὶ τοῦ σφαγέντος Ἑβραίου.
 - 21 On the *furca* as substitute of crucifixion, see the fundamental discussion in Franchi de’ Cavalieri 1907. On ἀνασκοιοπίζω and its use in the Byzantine texts, see Cook 2014, 296–310 and *passim*.
 - 22 Here according to the translation in Starr 1939, no. 106.
 - 23 The inequality between Jews and Christians is also evident, though not so strongly emphasized as one would expect, in the *Procheiros nomos*: see Colafemmina 2012, 7–8. Luzzati Laganà 1996 (and Luzzati Laganà 2004, 81–2) was inclined to attribute the whole anti-Judaic implications in the words and acts of Neilos almost exclusively to the attitude of his biographer. In any case, she considered the Bisignano episode a pure *exemplum*.
 - 24 An explanation once suggested by Colafemmina 1989. The same scholar, later on, apparently dismissed his view (Colafemmina 2012, 7), just speaking of a disproportion due to the anti-Semitic views of Neilos. Here and further on, all quotations from the Greek text of the Septuagint are given according to Rahlfs’s edition.
 - 25 The interest in understanding the law introduced in the *Bios* by this passage has been emphasized also in Luzzi 2004, 185, note 44.
 - 26 LXX: ¹¹εἰσελθάτω ἐνώπιόν σου ὁ στεναγμός τῶν πεπεδημένων κατὰ τὴν μεγαλωσύνην τοῦ βραχίονός σου περιποίησαι τοὺς υἱοὺς τῶν τεθνατωμένων.¹² ἀπόδος τοῖς γειτοσιν ἡμῶν ἑπταπλασίονα εἰς τὸν κόλπον αὐτῶν τὸν ὀνειδισμόν αὐτῶν ὃν ὀνειδίσάν σε κύριε.
 - 27 *Bios* § 46–47, 90–1.

- 28 Translation by Starr 1939, no. 106, p. 162.
- 29 Translation by Starr 1939, no. 106, p. 162.
- 30 Kazhdan 1984; Skinner 1997; Pilsworth 2000, 258–9. See also Palmieri 2012–13, 888–9.
- 31 See *Bios* § 23, p. 70: Πολλῶν μέντοι συμβουλευόντων ιατρικῆς ἐπιμελείας προσανασχεῖσθαι, οὐδαμῶς κατεδέξατο τοῦτο, γινώσχων ἀθεράπευτον εἶναι ὑπὸ χειρὸς ἀνθρωπίνης τὴν διαβολικὴν ἀλγηδόνα.
- 32 As for the many echoes of Greek and Latin ancient texts in the Hebrew literature of the High Middle Ages, it is known that the most valuable collection of materials can be found in the *Sefer Yosippon* (10th century). The topic of the Jewish reading of the apocrypha has been scarcely examined so far (see for instance Yassif 1999, 38–51), although it seems that some Hebrew translation of these texts, both from Latin and Greek, were probably accomplished in South Italy. These interests were not limited to historical or pseudo-historical works (such as the already mentioned *Judith* and *Maccabees*, or the *Liber Antiquitatum Biblicarum*), but were also directed to ethics and wisdom literature: the cases of *Tobit* and *Ecclesiasticus* or *Ben Sirah* are known, and Donnolo himself openly quotes, in his *Sefer Ḥakmoni*, the pseudo-Solomonic *Book of Wisdom* (on this latter, see the short discussion in Mancuso 2010, 37–8).
- 33 Followed by many others, Colafemmina 1989 (and Colafemmina 1996, 5) argued that Donnolo in his *Sefer Ḥakmoni* expressed the same view mentioned by Neilos on this topic. Donnolo's words, however, are very different and do not deal with God's greatness and incommensurability that cannot be grasped by men, but specifically with God's aspect or image (*selem* and *d'mût* in Hebrew) in the context of the commentary of Gen. 1:26 ('Let us make man to our image and likeness'), which belongs together with a theological debate about God's corporeity which, in Donnolo's days, was of paramount importance in Judaism from the Mediterranean to Baghdad: see Altmann 1968; Clines 1968; Lacerenza 2015.
- 34 Translation by Starr 1939, no. 106.
- 35 Some precedents and contexts in Spyridonidou-Skarsouli 1995, 177–8, Nollé 2007, 169–70. The use of the two images goes back up to Sophocles (frag. 741, ed. Nauck) and even more to Plato's *Phaedrus*, LX, in the words of Socrates (οὐκ ἄρα σπουδῇ αὐτὰ ἐν ὕδατι γράψει μέλανι σπείρων διὰ καλάμου μετὰ λόγων ἀδυνάτων μὲν αὐτοῖς λόγῳ βοηθεῖν, ἀδυνάτων δὲ ἱκανῶς τάληθῃ διδάξαι).
- 36 On 'the Law and the Prophets' (ὁ νόμος καὶ οἱ προφῆται) in the Gospels as indicating specifically the Hebrew Bible as the specific Jewish text and its acceptance in the Judaic circles, see Lk. 16:16 (but also in 16:29 and 31 as 'Moses and the Prophets'); Mt. 5:17, 11:13, 22:40; and so on.
- 37 Also Colafemmina 2012, 6–7. His observation that this episode is perhaps a complete 'invention of the biographer, designed to educate readers on how to relate to the Jews' could be extended to almost all the anecdotes included in the *Bios*.
- 38 On this point, see also the observations in Crimi 2013, 169–71 (not mentioning Donnolo in this context).
- 39 Quoting Jn. 12:42. The hagiographer, however, replaces Φαρισαῖοι with Ἰουδαῖοι.
- 40 On the possibility for the Jewish courts, at these latitudes and in this period, to deliberate and execute death sentences, see the sparse evidence in Starr 1939, 38–40. Cases of death sentences are quoted for the ninth century in the *Megillat Ahima'as*, recorded in the eleventh century: see the passage in Starr 1939, no.

- 51, p. 118; and its commentary in Bonfil 2009, 65. All of them are pronounced by the controversial figure of R. Aaron of Baghdad, but they cannot be invoked as positive proof for the Jewish possibility to emit death sentences, because the passage appears just as a taxonomic sequence of a variety of faults and punishments (adultery = strangulation; murder = decapitation; sodomy = stoning; incest = burning) which is clearly meant as exemplar or purely symbolic.
- 41 Burgarella 1989, 465.
 - 42 Translation by Starr 1939, no. 107.
 - 43 See Ginzberg 1909–38, vol. IV, 348; vol. VI, 435 note 12.
 - 44 Donnolo's alleged admiration of Neilos is stressed in Kohen 2007; it seems however very difficult to accept the view of a 'Byzantine-Jewish ecumenical atmosphere in tenth century Southern Italy' (88). On the other hand, Kohen seems right in observing that Donnolo was used by the anonymous biographer as some kind of counterpart to Neilos, a 'healer of the body' compared to/contrasted with/juxtaposed to a 'healer of the soul.' On the parallelism, in Neilos's and Donnolo's lives, as 'colleagues' healing with different methods, see also Sharf 1975, 176.
 - 45 von Falkenhausen 2012a, 293.
 - 46 The enduring polemical perspective in Jewish-Christians relations, also in this context, has been emphasized by Rotman 2010, 230 and Rotman 2012, 920 (despite some inaccurate references to the sources).
 - 47 Palmieri 2012–13, 871–8. On Neilos's visit, Rousseau 1973. The Jewish conditions in Byzantine South Italy in that period were considered not to be so heavy by von Falkenhausen 1996, 27–8 and von Falkenhausen 2012a.

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10 Calabria and the Muslims during Saint Neilos's lifetime

Alessandro Vanoli

It is well known that in the Greek hagiographic literature from South Italy, the Muslims are a very widespread presence. Between the ninth and tenth centuries, Muslims are a very important part of the background for saints's lives, particularly those such as Elias the Younger, Leo-Luke, Elias Speleotes, Vitalis, Sabas the Younger, Luke of Demenna and Neilos. Additionally, in Neilos's *bios*, the reader finds many references to the Muslims, who are variously called Saracens, Hagarenes and pagans.¹ This contribution not only does not discuss this Islamic presence from a literary point of view, according to the different *topoi* or literary reminiscences related to the Islamic world, but also does not study this *bios* as a historical source in order to use single episodes from which to infer any historical reality.² Instead, this chapter investigates the contemporary Arabic sources in an attempt to flesh out the historical reality and to examine the daily historical context that was reflected in the *Life of Saint Neilos*. The answer to this question is determined by the analysis of two elements: the different typologies of "Islamic presence" presented by Neilos's *bios*, and the sources.

In Neilos's *bios*, three different ways by which the Muslims are represented can be identified: first of all as enemy; second, as a concrete presence in the territory; third, as part of a wider multicultural geographic space. These three paths of analysis will be related to different kinds of sources. Of course, most of the sources are in Arabic, and this requires some additional considerations. Generally, in the coeval Arabic chronicles,³ information about Sicily or Calabria is limited and sometimes completely absent. The one important exception is the short anonymous chronicle called *History of the Island of Sicily* (*Ta'rīḥ Ǧazīrat Šiqillīyya*), also commonly known as the *Cambridge Chronicle*.⁴ All other information is derived from chroniclers who were very far from the Italian events, both from a temporal and a geographical point of view. These chroniclers include Ibn al-Aḫṭar, who served the governors of Aleppo and Mossul (d. 1233);⁵ the Egyptian al-Nuwayrī (d. 1333);⁶ and two Maghrebins, Ibn Ḥaldūn (d. 1406) and Ibn 'Idārī al-Marrākuṣī (13th-14th cent.). These authors's chronicles are, in fact, only compilations of compilations,

related to each other by complex intertextual relationships. It is often⁷ very difficult to identify the most ancient layers of composition (sometimes whole paragraphs, or often just shorter sentences) and the motivations that determined the choices of the authors. In other words, these writers represent a historiographical tradition, written almost entirely away from Italy, and almost always after the events.

This historiographical problem requires, at the very minimum, a certain degree of caution in uncritically accepting much of the information provided by these sources. Certainly, one should avoid using them with a straightforwardly positivist methodology. There is still a lot of work to be done to grasp the complexity and the implications of many elements presented in these narratives if one is to discern, beyond any naive faith in the truth-value of the chroniclers, which materials they used to shape their stories and why they proposed these particular narratives to their readers.

The Saracens as the enemy

If we look at tenth-century Southern Italy from the perspective of Latin and Greek Christian sources, the Saracens appear first of all as the enemy. They were an enemy that threatened the coasts and terrorized the inhabitants, but they were also an enemy characterized by another peculiar aspect: a different religion perceived as a Christian heresy, a particularly cruel and constant falsehood. There is a great deal of literature devoted to the biblical and patristic roots of these kinds of *topoi* used by Christian authors to explain the Saracen danger. More generally, there is a huge body of literature devoted to the Christian medieval perception of Islam.⁸ In this essay, the opposite point of view – namely, the Islamic perspective – is adopted in the analysis of the reality of such incursions.

It is difficult to define what constitutes an attack; military assault is often a matter of perspective. For example, what ninth-century Christian sources call Saracen or Moorish “piracy”, the Arabic sources refer to as *ġazuwa*, raids, but in a specific sense:⁹ attacks against a frontier territory, which is a space in which *ġihād* is allowed (and often expected).¹⁰ Moreover, this kind of piracy seems to be related to political changes in the Islamic world. During the “Abbasid” period, the Muslim empire had ceased to expand and was more interested in defending its frontiers than in acquiring new territories. For the caliphs it was increasingly difficult to maintain authority in the Islamic territories in Africa and on the Iberian Peninsula. This situation continued during the tenth century and produced a number of attacks in Southern Italy. For a long time, historians have broadly defined the history of these attacks.¹¹

The end of the ninth century saw a period of civil war in Sicily and campaigns in South Italy recorded unanimously by almost all the chroniclers. Islamic ships attacked Calabria in 888–89, in 901 and 902, and in

the period between 912–15. In Ifriqiya, the Aghlabids were overthrown by the Fatimid Ismailis who brought a radically new form of ideology to the Islamic world.¹² The first Fatimid governor arrived in Sicily in 910,¹³ and this change of government contributed to increase the dissatisfaction of many people on the island. But the arrival of the Fatimids also caused the increased frequency of raids in Calabria. Reggio was taken in 918, as the Cambridge Chronicle indicates.¹⁴ Afterwards, they took Agia Agathè, today Oppido (921–22) and Bruzzano (923–24), even if in the same period the Fatimids arrived as far as Puglia and Campania.

Meanwhile, there were uprisings against the Fatimids in Sicily. In particular, the one in Palermo in the year 947 showed the complex relationship between some notables on the island and the Byzantine power in the South of Italy. It was in that circumstance that the Fatimids turned to the Kalbites, a rich Arab family from Ifrīqiya that would govern Sicily in the following period. It is striking that even at the height of Islamic power in Sicily, the *amirs* often had recourse to military assistance from Ifrīqiya. It is also notable how such campaigns resulted in mixed success. They often merely obtained payments deemed sufficient by the Muslim forces from besieged towns, as for example at Gerace in 950.¹⁵ Unusually, after this campaign, in 953, a decision was taken to build a mosque in Reggio.

In the Spring of 956 Calabria was sacked by a fleet that arrived from Africa. Emperor Constantine VII Porphyrogenetos (905–59) mobilized a considerable fleet in order to re-establish control over Southern Italy. In Calabria, the Byzantine fleet seized an island and many Muslim ships. The mosque at Reggio was destroyed. A truce was established, but in 957–58 the Muslims that remained in Calabria received reinforcements from Sicily and defeated the Byzantines. It was a period of strong militarization of the Calabrian *theme*: new fortifications and new shelters were built in many places throughout the region.

In the following years, between 975 and 977, the Muslim armies reached Puglia. But in Italy the Kalbites came to clash with the German army of Emperor Otto II (955–83). The Muslim fleet defeated Otto at Capo Colonna in 982, and this victory opened the way to a successful period of military enterprises in the South. There were the assault of 986, with the taking of Bovalino and Gerace, the siege of Cosenza (988), but also of Taranto (991), Matera (994) and Benevento (1002).

This kind of chronology testifies to the concrete and continued presence of Muslim raids in Calabria during the last decades in the tenth century. In this sense this helps to understand the daily fear that the inhabitants lived with and that is reflected in hagiographical literature. But the most interesting element that seems to emerge from these Arabic narratives is the concrete Muslim presence in Calabria, inside the territory and not only along the coasts. The chronicles are not clear about this point, but there are some concrete references to apostates among the Southern-Italian Muslims; and this detail implies either that captive

Muslims had been converted to Christianity, or that isolated pockets of Muslims on the continent had been absorbed into Calabria's indigenous religious culture.

The Saracens as a daily presence

During the tenth century in Calabria, it was possible to find Muslims inland as well as on the coasts; while this is perceptible in both the Greek hagiographic literature and in the Arabic chronicles, it is extremely difficult to tell just how widespread this interaction was.

We know that during the eleventh century there were Arab settlements along the Tyrrhenian coast (Amantea, Tropea) and in the interior, towards the plateau of Sila (Santa Severina) with temporary occupations of the Gulf of Squillace (Catanzaro and *Scillacium*-Squillace).¹⁶ However, the sources are largely silent about this. Regarding Amantea, Tropea and Santa Severina most information comes from Greek sources.¹⁷ In fact, we know that the governor al-'Abbās Ibn al-Faḍl created permanent Islamic colonies on behalf of the Aghlabides in the fortresses of Santa Severina, Amantea and Tropea in 840. Additionally, we know that Byzantium reacted decades later by re-conquering all these three places in 886. The Arab sources are almost silent about this period, particularly concerning the events of the eleventh century. However, we have enough information, derived from both tenth-century material and textual sources to say that Islam did not disappear from Calabria.

It is not strange that Arab geographers wrote very little about Calabria; Islamic geography as a literary genre¹⁸ was almost exclusively devoted to describing the *dār al-Islām*, the "land" or the "house" of Islam, that is, the area of the world under Islamic rule where Muslims could practice their religion freely. Obviously, Calabria was always classified as a territory of the *Rūm* (i.e., the "Byzantines" and, in a wider sense, the Christians).

However, some names do appear in the sources. One of the most important cases is Amantea. Byzantine Amantea was conquered by the Aghlabids in 846 and became an emirate, like Tropea and Santa Severina. Amantea, a *kastron* on the sea with a port, was re-conquered by the Byzantines in 886, but it nevertheless seems that the relationship between Amantea and the Arab world remained strong. Later, Amantea was again occupied by the Muslims between 976 and 1031. However, this last episode is not recorded in Arabic historiography, but reported solely by Western sources.¹⁹ In the case of Amantea, there are some important references in Arabic sources. The city was cited by the geographer Ibn Ḥawqal (end of the 10th century) as *M.n.t.ya*,²⁰ and Ibn al-Aḡīr recorded that the city was taken by the Byzantines in 886.²¹

During its period of Islamic rule and later, Amantea seems to have been one of the seaports on the West-East route that linked the seaport

of al-Andalus in Spain to Constantinople and on the South-North route that connected Africa and Northern Europe via Sicily, Amalfi, Salerno and Pisa.²² From an economic point of view, it is accepted that the commercial exchanges of Amantea and of southern Calabria in general were essentially turned toward Sicily. For instance, it is known that the silk trade provided Calabria with important revenues until the middle of the eleventh century, and that this silk trade was exclusively connected to Sicily.²³

Some important but limited material artefacts testify to the Islamic presence in this area. One example is a funerary stele fragment, similar to the kind of steles that were used for the first time in Sicily around the tenth century.²⁴ It is hard to determine the precise date and place of production; although there were Calabrian artisans who were familiar with Islamic art,²⁵ it is also possible that steles were recycled and commercialized, traveling from North Africa to Sicily and South Italy.²⁶ In any case, the presence of these steles in Amantea testifies to the long-lasting relationship between this town and the surrounding Islamic world.

There is a similar phenomenon in Santa Severina, where archaeological excavations have documented the presence of Islamic ceramics, specifically the Sicilian-Maghrebian ceramic of the eleventh or twelfth century. Glazed cups decorated in brown, green and yellow have been discovered in Caccuri.²⁷ Furthermore, these kinds of objects can testify to the same continuity in customs and trade. Sometimes the artefacts are not only related to commerce but also to a concrete presence. For example, in the Cattolica of Stilo in Calabria, two Arabic inscriptions were discovered on one column of this important ninth-century religious building in 1997.²⁸ These inscriptions are important because they are both spontaneous and occasional expressions by an unknown believer rather than an official record.²⁹

It is difficult to obtain sufficient material data to contextualize extant elements. Contextual interpretation is generally problematic for the entire region of Calabria, particularly for the period between the eighth and tenth centuries.³⁰ Thus, only conjecture is possible: maybe, the small church was briefly used as mosque; or the Arabic inscriptions might simply be a trace of Islamic presence in the area. Either way, we have to remember that the written sources also corroborate Islamic activities in the area of Stilo, such as the very famous battle of 982 between Abu al-Kasim and Otto II, as well as a lesser-known Saracen assault around in 995.³¹

One of the most famous and explicit testimonies to the presence of a mosque in Calabria in the tenth century is the account by Ibn al-Athir about the construction of a mosque at Reggio in the year 953:

[al-Ḥasan] built there a large mosque (*masğid*) in the middle of the town. At one of its corners he constructed a minaret. He imposed

conditions on the Byzantines (*rūm*) that they should not prevent the Muslims from frequenting it, performing prayers there or giving the call to prayer; that no Christian should enter it; that any Muslim prisoner would be safe there regardless of whether he was an apostate or had persisted in his faith; and if [the Christians] smashed a single stone of it, then every church of theirs in Sicily and Ifrīqiya would be demolished. The Byzantines met all of these conditions with mean-spirited humility. Al-Ḥasan stayed in Sicily until [the imām-caliph] al-Manṣūr died.³²

As has been noted,³³ the choice of Reggio was significant as a site to carve out and defend a sacred space and place of sanctuary from the religious “other.” The town, with its strategic location, had often been a bone of contention and had been besieged or sacked on at least five occasions between 918 and 930. But the construction of a mosque testifies above all to the presence of a number of Muslim faithful: Muslims on the continent who had been absorbed into Calabria’s religious culture, groups of more or less isolated Muslims, and even passing merchants. In other words, these few lines of narrative underpin the existence of those relationships suggested by the scant material finds. Even if in the tenth century Calabria was not under Islamic control (with some small exceptions, as we have seen), contact with that world continued, projecting the region onto a wider Mediterranean space.

Islamic Calabria in perspective

Calabria was not politically a part of the *dār al-Islām* (the territory of Islam), but the region maintained important relations with the Muslim world. As we have seen, Calabria had important commercial relationships with Sicily. However, there was also an extensive exchange of people, as can be seen in Neilos’s *Life*. Here, I am referring to the very well-known history of the Sicilian Emir, who freed three monks captured during a raid and imprisoned in Sicily out of respect for the saint.³⁴ We may perceive similarly well-connected broader networks in the case of the mysterious Metropolitan named Blatton, who is otherwise unattested.³⁵ In Neilos’s *Life*, Blatton is described as brother of the Caliph’s wife; he had arrived from Africa with a number of prisoners that he had ransomed.

Setting aside the important historical problems posed by such hagiographical data, we may consider these elements simply as evidence of a deep relationship between Calabria and the Islamic world, reaching not only to Sicily but also beyond, to the entire Mediterranean Islamic space. It is these relationships that could perhaps explain something of the importance given by Arabic geography to some cities in Calabria.

Among these geographical sources, the most important source for the tenth century is Ibn Ḥawqal’s *Book of Geography*. As we have seen

above, Ibn Ḥawqal's description may be considered as a signal of the importance of ports such as Amantea and Reggio, considered as part of the Mediterranean commercial network that involved the Muslims in their role as traders. Moreover, Ibn Ḥawqal wrote at the end of the tenth century, a time when Sicily was still a fundamental part of the Islamic Mediterranean world. His map demonstrates a very good knowledge of the Mediterranean basin. Although we have no precise idea of his working method, he certainly travelled in these regions and we may be sufficiently sure that the general structure of his map is a memory of Greek mathematical geography, while the toponymy superimposed refers to the tenth-century situation.³⁶ Looking at his map, it seems that the Italian peninsula is limited to Calabria and the Gulf of Taranto. Among the toponyms we find Bisignano (*Masniyān* for *Basniyān*), Cosenza (*Kasha-sha*), Amantea (*Mantiya*), Reggio (*Rayū*) (di Calabria), Pentadattilo (*Ibn Dhaqtal*), Bova (*Buuwva*) and Petracucca (*Qastarquqa*).³⁷ Ibn Ḥawqal is describing cities in the territory of the *Rūm* but his geographic attention could really be a signal of the commercial relationship that Calabria maintained with the Islamic world, maybe also mediated by the Jewish communities.³⁸

During the Norman reign of Roger II (1095–1154), the Andalusian (but perhaps Sicilian-born)³⁹ al-Idrīsī wrote one of the most important works of that period: a description of the world that used prior sources by integrating them with more recent pieces of information, and illustrated the whole with a number of maps in which the earth appeared divided in seven climes: his *Kitāb nuzhat al-muštāq fī iḥtirāq al-āfāq* (*A Diversion for the Man Longing to Travel to Far-Off Places*), finished at the beginning of the year 1154. In this book al-Idrīsī offers a more detailed description of Calabria:

(Third part of the fourth clime) [. . .] In this part there are also maritime and continental cities; among them šant fīmī (Sant'Eufemia), 'tr.bīa (Tropea), al-māša (Massa), tūḡ.š (Bova?), ḡ.rāḡī (Gerace), nār.ṭ.s (Neretus, Nardò), q.līb.lī (Gallipoli), qašṭra (Castro), uḡr.nt (Otranto), 'brnds (Brindisi), l.ḡḡ (Lecce), l.blūna (Avlona), b.ḡr.nt (Butrinto), ḡ.māra (Chimara), fāskyū (Parga), b.n.dsa (Vonitsa), 'ḡr. nūblī (Drinopoli) e yān.na (Janina). Now we must discuss the remembered places, describing them city by city, land by land, with the help of Allāh. So, we say that this sea, described in this part, has a width, from west, of six days of navigation, going from r.yyū (Reggio) to qābis (Capes) directly. Reggio is a city of Qalūriya (Calabria) on the west coast of the strait in siqillīa (Sicilia). Between Reggio and Messina there are seven miles, that is the width of the strait between the two cities. Reggio is small but populated; it has fruits and vegetables, important markets, baths and walls of stone.⁴⁰

Al-Idrīsī is showing us a more complex map than Ibn Hawqal's. He was a Muslim geographer working for a Christian king; therefore the idea of the world reflected by his book should be consonant with that of Roger II. In any case, al-Idrīsī's description of Calabria will be used by other Arabic authors. For example, al-Ḥimyarī, who lived between the thirteenth and the fourteenth century,⁴¹ offered in his book a literary quotation of al-Idrīsī's words about Reggio. But this long-lasting trace of an ancient Islamic Calabria could be a good starting point for a different study: why was this region interesting to Arabic authors (and readers) still in the thirteenth century? How long was Calabria perceived by the Islamic world as a part of an ancient network?

Notes

- 1 Cosentino 2008, 287.
- 2 The best example of this kind of analysis is available in von Falkenhausen 1989.
- 3 For example, see: al-Balāḍūrī, *Futūḥ al-buldān*.
- 4 This Chronicle is extant in two different versions: the Arabic version, preserved at the Cambridge University Library, which goes from the year 827 to 964–65; and the Greek, that covers until the year 987. See Schreiner 1975, 326–40.
- 5 About Ibn al-Aṭīr, see Richards 2008. About his sources see ul-Hasan 2005.
- 6 The whole historical section of his work is structured in dynastic narrations, and more or less in a chronological way. See Little 1970, 31; Amitai 2001, 23–4.
- 7 So, for example, with regard to the conquest of Sicily, Ibn al-Aṭīr had to refer to at least one source that is unknown to us, the same source that was later used by al-Nuwayrī and Ibn Ḥaldūn. Ibn Ḥaldūn in turn knew and used also the work of Ibn al-Aṭīr. Instead, Ibn 'Idārī, related with al-Andalus and the Occidental Maghrib, represents sometimes the only source for much of the information about Sicily (but the same is also true for Calabria).
- 8 Daniel 1960; Ducellier 1999; Tolan 2003.
- 9 Picard 2007, 581; Borrut 1999–2000.
- 10 Cf. Bonner 1996; Moreno 1991.
- 11 For a chronology and the standard sources, see Moscato 1902, repr. 1963; more recently Noyé 1998.
- 12 About the Fatimids, see Halm 1996 and Brett 2001.
- 13 See Chiarelli 1986 and Pellitteri 1997.
- 14 *Cambridge Chronicle*, 169: "And in the year 6426 (917–8): in the month of Sat.nbr (September) the fleet and army returned to Ifrīqiya and the amīr of the town (al-balad) was Sālim. At the end of the year ships from Ifrīqiya came and Rayūh (Reggio) was taken by night." English translation by Alex Metcalfe 2009 [accessed July 24, 2014 http://medievalsicily.com/Docs/02_Islamic/Cambridge%20Chronicle.pdf]
- 15 Metcalfe 2009, 53.
- 16 About the presence of the Saracens in Calabria, see Zinzi 1988 and 1998.
- 17 Amari 1933, vol. I, 583; Cilento 1969; von Falkenhausen 1978, 22; von Falkenhausen 1982, 50; Guillou 1983, 4; Burgarella 1983, 218.
- 18 About geography in the Islamic classic world see Miquel 1967.

- 19 Turchi 1981, p. 21; Tonghini 1997, 203–30.
- 20 Ibn Ḥawqal, *Kitāb ṣūrat al-arḍ*, p. 64: probably to be read *Mantiya*. See Arioli 1997, 219.
- 21 Ibn al-Aḡīr, in *Biblioteca Arabo-Sicula*, in Arabic, 245.
- 22 Cf. Lewicki 1978, 447–9.
- 23 Guillou 1983, 64.
- 24 The stele was discovered in the Palace of the Clarisse in 1989 and presented two Arabic inscriptions. About its interpretation see Tonghini 1997, 209–17.
- 25 Di Gangi 1995, 96 n. 175; Guillou and Tcheremissinoff 1976, 681, 685; Zinzi 1988, 256–60, 263.
- 26 Scerrato 1994, 341.
- 27 The ceramics discovered around 1930 in Caccuri, in the Province of Crotone, are now at the Museo Archeologico di Reggio Calabria: Cuteri 1998, 53; Lebole 2003, 183–9. About this kind of Sicilian production, called “pavoncella,” see Mangiaracina 2013, 94.
- 28 Cuteri 1997.
- 29 Cuteri 1997, 74–5. The inscription, in the upper part of the column, does not present a regular *ductus* and we can indeed observe a kind of “afterthought.” The writing, grossly realized with a punch, corresponds to the *shahada*: *lā llāha illā-Llāh wa. . .* (“There is no god but God and . . .”) . . . The second inscription at the base of the column is much more linear than the first one; and we can read: *al-ḥamdu li-llāhi*: “the praise??praise?? to God.”
- 30 Cuteri, Hyeraci and Salamida 2011, 363.
- 31 In the *Life* of Saint Giovanni Terista, where the biographer relates an Arabic incursion in the territory of Stilo and specifically the sack of the village of Cursano, place of origin of the saint. See Borsari 1953, 12–13.
- 32 Ibn al-Athīr, in *Biblioteca Arabo-Sicula*, Arabic, I: 260–1.
- 33 Metcalfe 2009, 54.
- 34 St Neilos, *Βίος καὶ πολιτεία*, ed. Giovanelli, 110–11.
- 35 For the possible interpretations of the name Blatton, see von Falkenhausen 1989, 293.
- 36 Ducène 2004 and 2008.
- 37 Ibn Ḥawqal, *Kitāb ṣūrat al-arḍ*, 64.
- 38 About the importance of the Jewish communities in Calabria for the relationship with the Islamic world, see Lacerenza 2004.
- 39 Dubler 1965; Hadj Sadok 1983, 11 ff.; Oman 1971; Amara and Nef 2001.
- 40 al-Idrīsī, *Opus geographicum*, 627.
- 41 Edited in Rizzitano 1956. See also de Simone 1984.

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11 “Ceramiclast” in the *Bios* of St Neilos

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In the twenty-eighth chapter of the *Life of St Neilos* the Younger there is a curious neologism, *χυτροκλάστης* – *ceramiclast*.¹ The word is part of Neilos’s speech to his disciple Stephen whom he upbraids for breaking a pot and then orders to go down the mountain to the monastery in Rossano wearing the shards of the pot around his neck in an act of contrition. Neilos says that Stephen must do this, “Lest they [the brothers in the monastery below] think we are ceramiclasts (*χυτροκλάσται*).” Neilos’s expression however refers to much more than just the shards of the broken pot in Stephen’s hands. Certainly the word evokes the term iconoclast (*ικονοκλάστης*), albeit in a seemingly jocular manner, and so also alludes to the eighth- and ninth-century controversies regarding divine images in which the monasteries were fierce defenders of iconography and oppressed for this by Leo III and Constantine V, leading to the migration of thousands of monks to Southern Italy.² Furthermore, as the compound is constructed from a term for a common ceramic that is very old in the Greek language and also integral with some essential aspects of life, Neilos’s statement implies a variety of possible meanings. Here the neologism’s various implications will be examined in order to see how this vignette represents the thematic arc of the saint’s *bios*.

The first element of Neilos’s word, *χύτρα*, is a common term for an earthenware cooking pot, though it is not the word used in the narration for the pot Stephen employs. Instead the text has the less specific *σκεῦος*, which carries the more general meaning of vessel. Nonetheless Neilos’s admonition is constructed out of a word appropriate to the cookware, as a *χύτρα* is a ceramic used over flame, and Stephen was boiling beans in the pot he had overfilled and broken. The word *χύτρα* was a familiar term for this type of domestic ceramic from archaic times, forms of which appear in early Greek literature; in the *Works and Days* Hesiod writes of the *χυτρόπους*, a cooking pot with three attached feet.³ The word appears frequently enough for a commonplace object in the works of fifth- and early fourth-centuries BC authors, such as Plato and Aristophanes.⁴ It is from the latter of these two authors that we find some noteworthy instances of the use of the *χύτρα* established in Hellenic culture beyond its simple

culinary role. A line from the comic play *Thesmophoriazusae* refers to the use of the pot for the burial of children, while the verb χυτρίζω, to inter children in a pot, is found earlier also in a fragment of Sophocles’s *Priam* and in one by the fifth-century comic playwright Pherecrates.⁵ Another play by Aristophanes, the *Plutus*, contains a peculiar expression, ταύτην χύτραις ἰδρυτέον, which, we are told by the scholiast commenting on the verse, referred to the old custom in which the altars and statues of deities were consecrated with a sacrifice of pots filled with boiled pulse.⁶ Additionally twice referred to in his comedies is the χύτρος, the third day of the Anthesteria festival at Athens.⁷ The Anthesteria was a celebration held in the period of the year which corresponds to the end of January or the beginning of February. An important festival that celebrated the opening of the new wine, it was one of the oldest at Athens with origins in the early first millennium BC.⁸ As such the playwright’s incorporation of these expressions indicate that the earthenware cooking pot had in the Greek world a deep connection to the sacred, as a tool with uses for celebration and sanctification in ceremonies honoring both life and death. In particular the scholiast on Aristophanes’s *Frogs* cites the historian Theopompos of Chios who, writing in the fourth century BCE, offered an etymological origin for the χύτροι celebration of the Anthesteria. The scholiast states that Theopompos, the fourth-century BCE historian from Chios, wrote that this part of the festival was celebrated for the sacrifice made by the survivors of the deluge as a remembrance for those who did not survive. The priests boiled diverse types of seeds in a χύτρα, and then presented it as a sacrificial offering for Hermes Chthonios on behalf of the dead. The pot used for this ceremony was boiled by everyone in the city and was never eaten from, not even by the priests.⁹ The sacrifice was not a communal offering and not for an Olympian god, rather it seems that the food was for those who had died.¹⁰ In this manner the entry in the *Suda* on the festival remarks that the ghosts of the dead were going about Athens during the celebration. Though these references are from the comic stage, they should not be considered as abnormal uses since their appearance in the comedy medium denotes their ordinariness, else they would be less accessible to the audience. Rather, Aristophanes is joking with expressions and situations from the audience’s common knowledge and experience, the deeply ingrained aspects of the Hellenic cultural experience.

The Athenian festival and the various literary references represent the profound integration of this particular ceramic of the Hellenic domestic sphere into the religious as representative of some fundamental sacrifices, propitiation to the gods and a funerary offering for the dead who did not survive the deluge, the great rebirth of the earth, by those who did. For the Greeks of Attica the daily use of the χύτρα and the consumption of the food it contained would carry the phonetic reference to this placation of the ghosts of the dead. While these are examples of a tradition from the

ancient, pagan world, the Anthesteria was celebrated at Athens until the early fifth century AD at the very latest.

This knowledge was still part of the literature and history of the tenth-century Greek-speaking world and preserved in Byzantine compendia such as the *Bibliotheca* compiled by the ninth-century Patriarch of Constantinople Photios, a compilation of the reviews of 279 books that Photios had read, and the *Suda*, an encyclopedic dictionary, composed during Neilos's lifetime. These texts codified and arranged the knowledge that learned men like Neilos shared. In the *Suda*, the word *χύτρα* appears in thirteen different entries varying from colloquial expressions such as 'χύτραν ποικίλλειν', referring to the impossibility of something since a *χύτρα* was a commonplace cooking pot and not one to be decorated, to other phrases that describe the use of the ceramic placed on the roof in order to deter owls¹¹ and significantly to a ritual use of the pot to offer first fruits to the gods and for the establishment of herms and other apotropaic objects in front of doorways.¹² Moreover these religious associations of the pot reached beyond Attica, as an inscription dated to 296 BC from the island of Delos reveals: three broken *χυτρόγαυλοι* and three other carious *χυτρογαύλια* were among the items listed in the accounts of the Delian priesthood.¹³

The sacred associations of the ceramic in the Hellenic world surely provided an influence for the selection of *χύτρα* by the translators who composed the *Septuagint* as the stem for the word *χυτρόγαυλος* to represent the ten bronze lavers crafted by Hiram. These in turn were placed on ten bases and then were placed five on either side of Solomon's temple.¹⁴ The significance of these literary and scriptural examples is that the *χύτρα* is an established word in literature for pottery used in a variety of situations dealing with the sacred. With these precedents for 'sacred' pots, it is fitting that the word attributed to Neilos would make use of the element 'χύτρ', as it recalls those receptacles in the house of God in Jerusalem and so conveys the gravity of the offense of pot breaking. For a man of Neilos's knowledge the ceramic conveys a wide breadth of possible allusions.

Furthermore, in addition to the linguistic suggestion, there is the physical nature of the ceramic itself. For there exists in the Near East a significant body of so-called 'magic bowls', predominantly Jewish ceramics that are inscribed texts, comprising a variety of material including biblical quotations, early liturgical and mythological material.¹⁵ Many of these quotations are part of magical spells with practical purposes.¹⁶ The majority are inscribed with Hebrew-Aramaic scripts though there are some examples written in Mandaic and others in Syriac by the Christian communities. In the Jewish Diaspora settlement at Nippur these bowls were often found buried with the concave side down at thresholds, ostensibly to protect the interior spaces from the incursion of evil demons.¹⁷ The practice of writing incantations and curses on bowls began as early as the fourth century AD and continued as late into the eighth particularly

throughout the Sassanid Empire. The writing on these bowls is a variation of the sacred writing that was part of talismanic magical practices. While many of the bowls have an association with the transmission of Talmudic knowledge, significantly the practice of inscriptions onto such ceramics was not unique to Jewish culture nor was there any perceivable prohibition to the creation or use of these amulets. Rather it seems to be an act of piety to call upon God and the angels for help with human needs.¹⁸ The corpus of texts from these bowls offer a view "into a world of world of intimate intercultural exchange between communities that have otherwise come to be perceived quite often as separate entities with well-defined boundaries".¹⁹ While this comment refers to the Eastern society in which the bowls were produced, it is applicable to the politically contentious and ethnically mixed medieval world of Southern Italy in the ninth century, a region with a great deal of intercultural exchange. The events of Neilos's own life attest to the interplay and influence of a diverse set of cultural traditions, and the problems that arise from an unorthodox interaction of cultures.

Indeed this cultural syncretism could become a danger to religious orthodoxy as foreign influences blended into the landscape. This liminal space was the area in which magic and occult mystery practices existed and thrived.²⁰ One of the hallmarks of magic, both Christian and otherwise, in Late Antiquity was the primacy of language, both the spoken word and written, and the bowls with incantations written upon them highlight the power of the written text.²¹ While the manufacture of these magic bowls was no longer taking place in Neilos's day, the practice of writing upon ceramics continued in various guises, some with questionable intention. The tradition again reinforces the impressionability of this quotidian ceramic to the external imprint of less than holy forces, the bowl's receptivity to evil and its ability to perpetuate it.²² Furthermore the sacredness of the *χύτρα* itself is compromised and perverted from its purpose. One of the themes of this section of Neilos's *Vita* is the relationship of the ascetic with food and the proper regard for and preparation thereof. The maintenance of the *χύτρα*'s purity can be seen as an act of orthodox devotion, a rejection of all other facets of worldly existence.

Neilos's comment to Stephen itself is no direct reference to the festival or other sacred celebrations of the pagan Greek world, but his dismay at the misuse of the pottery is a continuation of this ancient Graeco-Roman tradition that placed veneration in the meal and its preparation; his use of *χύτρα* indicates an awareness of the sacred connotations of that particular ceramic. Moreover the ancient reverence involved with eating, and the preparation of meals in a special pot, have a particular similarity with the monastic tradition's concern for man's proper and often problematic relationship with food.²³ This basic necessity of daily life is for the ascetic a path fraught with danger, as the *bios* is clear that Stephen broke the pot because he had overfilled it with legumes. The sundering of the vessel was

the result of his overindulgence with food, and this is noted in the narrative.²⁴ As the relationship with food is a central aspect of the monastic life and a monk's diet and his preparation of meals, or lack thereof, is a common detail in hagiographies, Stephen's error has ample parallels or resonances in that tradition. I shall note a few. First, in the collection *Sayings of the Desert Fathers*, Abba Isaiah cooks some lentils in a pot and then presents them to his brethren who regard them as undercooked; Isaiah remarks, "Is it not enough to have simply seen the fire? That alone is a great consolation." The vignette speaks to the brethren's misunderstanding of the meal while the pot serves its role properly. In another saying, Abba Poemen remarks about the pot on the fire, noting that so long as it is on the fire no fly or animal can get near it; thus the pot on the fire is a metaphor for a monk engaged in his spiritual activities. Abba David is recorded as telling a tale of Abba Arsenius who followed a voice to some visions, one of which was an Ethiopian man using a broken receptacle to collect water from a lake; needless to say, much of the water fell back into lake. The voice tells Arsenius that the careless collection of the water symbolizes the man who does good deeds but spoils them by committing bad deeds in turn.²⁵ The common thematic thread in these tales is the role of the ceramic pot, a commonplace object with which man manipulates the physical world and so, indirectly, the spiritual world also.

The perils associated with the misuse of ceramics and other domestic utensils are manifold. The dangers present are long recorded in the Judeo-Christian record. One such danger is the use of a dish filled with liquid for prophecy, a practice known as *lekanomanteia*, divination through the viewing of water-filled vessel, a practice that is as old as the book of Genesis. Joseph is said to have practiced this form of oracular magic with his silver cup while in Egypt in the service of Pharaoh, as a practice that was distinctly Egyptian and not Judaic.²⁶ Furthermore the Old Testament law books condemn such uses of divination and prophecy.²⁷ Of course the repeated prohibitions imply this form of divination was and had been common throughout the eastern Mediterranean for centuries. From other sources, in particular from the texts contained in the *Papyri Graecae Magicae*, it is clear that this revelatory magic was still widely practiced in the Graeco-Roman, and most prominently in the Graeco-Egyptian, communities during the first through fifth centuries AD.²⁸ Throughout the following centuries a continual and systematic rejection of the pagan elements of Graeco-Roman culture prevailed as Christianity replaced these forms of divination and magic with its providential theology.

Nevertheless, some remnants of these practices remained in the corners of the eastern Roman world and its libraries even after the dissolution of the western empire. Moreover a pottery shard itself is something of an odd object and perhaps had some interesting connotations for Neilos. The shard provided a writing surface for all sorts of texts, so as an object that carried the written word it has a certain power. Neilos's

word could refer to the art of divination via the Greek alphabet inscribed onto pottery shards, such as is detailed by Michael Psellos in the eleventh century in a short treatise on the subject, *Interpretation of the twenty-four letters*.²⁹ Psellos is building on a long tradition of such occult practices.³⁰ Likewise it is mentioned in the tenth-century history known as *Theophanes Continuatus* that the Patriarch John VII the Grammarian, an iconoclast of the previous century, dabbled in occult practices such as *lekanomanteia* and sorcery.³¹ The saint's *bios* explicitly remarks upon Neilos's knowledge of and relationship with these forbidden arts saying that Neilos "both hated and loathed all magical practices, and mocked the so-called amulets and supposed spells, though he himself did not lack knowledge of the books on such subjects, due to his sharpness of mind and eagerness to know everything".³² That Neilos had the opportunity to educate himself in this particular branch of knowledge demonstrates both the existence of a body of accompanying literature on magic and the prevalence of these beliefs and practices, thus the necessity to avoid behavior that mirrored the occult.

Whereas the first stem of Neilos's word, *χῦτρα*, has a long history of allusions to magical uses of ceramics, in regard to the second element of the word, *κλάστης*, the effect is more immediate. Formed from the verb *κλάω*, to break, the second element recalls above all the controversy of Iconoclasm and its advocates. Yet it has echoes on a number of levels, including the significant act of breaking bread, central to the Mediterranean meal. Again there are old parallels for the use of this Greek verb in the Septuagint. The breaking of bread as a central element of mourning ritual is seen in Jeremiah 16:7, where it is one of the sign-acts listed by the prophet. These funeral meals were prepared and eaten at the occasion of death or were offered to the dead. The book of Tobit 4:17 mentions the offering of bread to the tombs of the righteous.³³ Thus for both Greek and Judaic culture, the intertwined nature of mourning and the meal had deep roots.

The Gospels retain this language with its overtones of ritual feasting and mourning, for example in Luke 24:35, ἐν τῇ κλάσει τοῦ ἄρτου. The breaking of bread therein linguistically recalls both life and death, and becomes intertwined in the ceremony of the Eucharist.³⁴ On the other hand, it also bears a figurative reference to the violent death of Christ, as expressed in 1 Corinthians 11:24, that is, the rending of Christ's body; at the ritual sacrifice as embodied by the Eucharist, the breaking of bread refers to the crucifixion, and with a linguistic history that traces back at least to the translation of the Septuagint and represents the synthesis of both Near Eastern and Hellenistic culture through the medium of Hellenistic thought in the Greek language. The language in Matthew 14:19 used for the feeding of the multitudes echoes this: ἀναβλέψας εἰς τὸν οὐρανὸν εὐλόγησεν καὶ κλάσας ἔδωκεν τοῖς μαθηταῖς τοὺς ἄρτους οἱ δὲ μαθηταὶ τοῖς ὄχλοις. Yet the production of grain dominated the cycle of agrarian life in

the ancient world, and thus the continuation of life; to eat bread is synonymous with eating *tout court*, as in Mark 3:20. The breaking of bread is an action that must be performed under appropriate circumstances and with proper reverence. It is of course no coincidence that in the life of Neilos the noun κλάσμα is used for the pieces of bread that constitute his ascetic meals.³⁵

As stated before the word iconoclast provides the most obvious resonance with Neilos's χυτροκλάστης, suggesting the violent breaking of sacred icons. In turn the Triumph of Orthodoxy in the previous century inspired the artistic output of churches and monasteries. Thus, artistic imagery flourished as a language of expression for the sacred. The contrite wearing of the potsherds communicates through this same language, for the purpose of the act is expressed visually to the beholder. In this regard, Neilos's word refers to Stephen's bad behavior as a transgression comparable to the destruction of icons. This is concordant with Neilos's attitude until the end of his life, that all aberrant behavior is bad, while Stephen's display of contrition with the potsherds signifies his good intention. The impact of Neilos's statement echoes all of these 'non-Orthodox' concerns implicit in the breaking of ceramics. In this fashion Neilos's own language was like that of Scripture, intended to be understood on different levels at the same time and to convey a variety of possible meanings. Even his seeming play upon words was laden with spiritual importance.

Notes

- 1 E. A. Sophocles translated it as 'pot-breaker'.
- 2 Vasiliev 1952, 262–5. Obolensky 1971, 173–4.
- 3 Hes. *Op.* 748. As well this is the first instance of a compound formed from χύτρος or χύτρα. They are equivalent words, though some uses of the plural of the masculine reflect the root meaning of 'deep holes'. The plural of the feminine χύτραι referred to the pottery market of Athens, cf. Ar. *Lysistrata* 557 and the second century AD grammarian Pollux 7.163. All these words find their origin in the root present in the verb χέω, to pour.
- 4 Ar. *Ach.* 284, *Av.* 43, etc. Plato *Rep.* 421 refers to the potter, χυτρεύς.
- 5 Ar. *Th.* 505. S. fr. 532. Pherecr. 247. Children were also buried in ceramics such as *pithoi* and *amphorae*, cf. Kurtz and Boardman 1971; Garland 2001; Vermeule 1979.
- 6 Ar. *Pl.* 1197 and sch. *ad loc.*, mentioning the dedication of an altar for Zeus. Cf. also Aristophanes fr. 245 in reference to the consecration of an altar for Peace.
- 7 *Ach.* 1076 and *Ra.* 218. On the festival see Harrison 1922, Burkert 1983, 237–42 with bibliography.
- 8 Burkert 1983, 213–15.
- 9 Theopomp. *Hist. fr.* 347a and 347b. Cf. Schrimpton 1991, 264.
- 10 Harrison 1922, 34–7. The meaning of the masculine form of the word also denotes deep holes in the ground, similar to the large pots submerged in the earth to the neck and used as grain storage that were common throughout the Mediterranean. That such pits were also used for burial again reinforces the connection between food, life and death.
- 11 Χύτραν τρέφειν. This explanation which likely comes from the scholia to Aristophanes's *Birds* has puzzled both ancient and modern commentators.

- 12 Χύτραις ἰδρυτέον. The entry also mentions the offering of boiled pulse in these pots, though not in connection with the *Anthesteria*.
- 13 I.G. XI,2 154a.71–73: . . . χυτρογαύλους τρεῖς σα-/κνοῦς καὶ ἄλλ]α χυτρογαύλια σαπρὰ τρία· οἰνοχόαι παλαιαὶ δέκα πέντε· ἄλλαι τρεῖς/ [οἰνοχόαι ὕγι]εῖς.
- 14 3 Ki. 7.24. The reference is to the book order and names as they were in the *Septuagint*.
- 15 Cf. Gianto 1996 and Hunter 1998.
- 16 These bowls are a ceramic that is only in this century beginning to receive the systematic treatment which they deserve, as they do contain some of the oldest biblical texts and as they date from the fifth to the eighth century; they are among the earliest extant biblical texts, with quotations not attested in the Dead Sea Scrolls. For an introduction and discussion of various corpora of magic bowls, see: Levene 2003; Shaked, Ford and Bhayro 2013.
- 17 This is reminiscent of the use of the χύτρα by the Greeks to dedicate temples.
- 18 Shaked, Ford and Bhayro 2013, 7–8.
- 19 Levene 2002.
- 20 Graff 1997; Karivieri 2010.
- 21 Levene 1999 notes one example with the phrase “by the name of Jesus”.
- 22 For two examples of such ‘other texts’ see Mavroudi 2012.
- 23 St Anthony’s fasting in the desert is one, fundamental example.
- 24 Later in the same chapter, Stephen finds wild asparagus to eat. Both he and Neilos enjoy these excessively, the text tells us they were seasoned by the devil not to be as bitter as normal, so Neilos forbids their eating them again.
- 25 Abba Isaiah 6, Abba Poemen 111, and Abba Arsenius 33.
- 26 *Gen.* 44:5–15.
- 27 For example, *Lev.* 19:26 and *Deut.* 18:10.
- 28 PGM III.276 and IV.221, while IV.154–285 are magical procedures dealing with various types of bowl divination. Cf. Aune 1983, 45.
- 29 *Op.* 36: *Interpretation of the twenty-four letters* (Ἑρμηνεία περὶ τῶν εἰκοσιτεσσάρων στοιχείων).
- 30 Cf. Ierodiakonou 2007.
- 31 Magdalino 2007.
- 32 *Vita Nili* 2. Translation by Capra, Milewski and Murzaku, forthcoming in Dumbarton Oaks Medieval Library.
- 33 Both avenues of explanation have been offered, the existence of archaeological evidence for meals left as offerings in tombs seems to verify the latter. Cf. *The Jerome Biblical Commentary ad loc.* 316. The bread of mourners in mentioned in Ezekiel 24:17.
- 34 Reference to the breaking of break is found, for example Mark 8:6, 19; 14:22, Luke 22:19, 24:30.
- 35 *Vita Nili* 11.1.

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12 The homosexual background attributed to a textual gap in the *Life of St Neilos from Rossano*

A re-evaluation

Andrea Luzzi

The *Life of St Neilos from Rossano* (BHG and BHG *Novum auctarium* 1370, hereafter VN)¹ was almost surely written by an anonymous disciple in the first decades of the eleventh century. For the elegance of the form, the abundance of historical references and wealth of contents, it stands out from all the other *Bioi* written in order to commemorate the most notable Italo-Greek saints from the ninth to the twelfth centuries. The ascetic itinerary described in the VN shows some traits in common with many other biographies of Italo-Greek saints. This *Bios*, though, stands out from the other Greek hagiographies from Southern Italy for the abundance of details and the large number of characters in it. It also differentiates itself from the majority of Byzantine hagiographies for the scarcity of miraculous narratives: while Neilos has the charism of prophecy and clairvoyance, he is not ascribed any sensationalistic miracles which normally abound in saints's *Lives*.² To this day three codices of the VN are known:³ 1) Italy, Grottaferrata, Library of the Greek Abbey, *Crypt.* B.β.II (gr. 142) (= C), parchment, copied in the same Abbey by an anonymous copyist between the end of the eleventh and the beginning of the twelfth century, and still now preserved in the library of the monastery;⁴ 2) France, Paris, Bibliothèque nationale, *Suppl. gr.* 106 (= P), paper, completed at the Abbey of Grottaferrata on August 10, 1591, as written in the subscription by the monk Paolo Bevilacqua from Tuscolo (today near Frascati, a little town in the so-called Castelli Romani);⁵ 3) Vatican City, Biblioteca Apostolica Vaticana, *Vat. gr.* 1205 (= V), a composite and miscellaneous paper manuscript: the VN is included in its first codicological unit (ff. 1r-56v), together with the *Life* of Bartholomew the Younger, which lacks almost half of the text (ff. 57r-61v); from the watermarks this section of the Vatican codex can be chronologically set between the end of the sixteenth and the very first years of the seventeenth century.⁶ According to an in-depth palaeographic analysis of the three above-mentioned codices and to the philological-comparative study

of the readings occurring in them, it is possible to assess that the manuscript now preserved in Paris was directly copied from the manuscript still today located in Grottaferrata,⁷ while the direct model of the Vatican codex was the Parisian one.⁸

It is well known that in all of these three manuscripts the text of the VN shows a textual omission in the opening part. Neilos has just moved from the north-Calabrian monastic area of the Merkourion into the Langobardic territory, precisely to the monastery of St Nazarius, located in today's Southern Cilento (in the province of Salerno), in order to receive the monastic tonsure,⁹ approximately at the age of 30 (according to the hagiographer). The saint is said to have spent forty days at the monastery of St Nazarius after taking the habit;¹⁰ the events that occurred during these forty days were indeed the subject-matter recounted in the lost part of the Greek text of the VN. The episodes described in the textual segment corresponding to the gap can be summarized in this way. Neilos stayed in St Nazarius for forty days, living in strict penitence and resolutely working as copyist. When an old acquaintance of his came to visit him at the monastery, he exchanged with him his cloak in return for a sheepskin. Later Neilos strictly reprimanded an insolent local squire, who had enslaved a young servant – or maybe a novice – of the monastery (this episode will be analysed below). In the Grottaferrata and Paris codices, this gap is due to the material loss of some pages, four in the *Cryptensis* (C) and two in the *Parisinus* codex. The extent of the gap in the two manuscripts can be measured thanks to the ancient foliation written at the top of the page, which in C jumps from 24 to 29 and in P from 9 to 12. The gap in C is due to the falling out of four pages belonging to the two internal *bifolia* of the second quinion; while, even though it seems to concern only two pages, the gap in the Paris codex starts much earlier and ends a little after the one in the Grottaferrata codex.¹¹ Unlike these two manuscripts, in *Vat. gr.* 1205 the gap is not physical (i.e., external), but occurs within an apparently continuous text.¹² It is less extensive than the material gap in the Paris codex and starts before the one in C, but it also ends before, thereby allowing the recovery of some lines of the Greek text, which today are not legible in the ancient *Cryptensis* codex.¹³ Nonetheless, the content of the missing Greek part of the VN is fortunately known thanks to an exact and complete translation into Latin, which is moreover the first translation on the VN in absolute terms. It was made by one of the most famous experts of the Greek language in the sixteenth century, the Calabrian Guglielmo Sirleto, who died in 1585 and was a Cardinal of the Holy Roman Church from 1565 onwards.¹⁴ It is not known in what year exactly the translation was made, but evidently when C was still intact. Sirleto's autograph survives in the manuscript Vatican City, BAV, *Vat. lat.* 6151.¹⁵ On the other hand, in the *editio princeps* by Cariophyllis¹⁶ the textual omission corresponds perfectly to the gap in codex C. Therefore, it is certain that this copy was

made on the model of the ancient *Cryptensis* manuscript, which therefore was already missing four pages by 1624. That year is therefore the exact *terminus ante quem* for the existence of the lacuna in C. Other *termini a quibus* for the lacuna, surely before the year 1624, even though not certain, are the copy of MS *Vat. gr.* 1205, probably made by Casnesios in the year 1605,¹⁷ and the second (after Sirleto's) translation into Latin of the VN by the future bishop of Termoli, Federico Mezio.¹⁸ It is possible to add, at least tentatively, the year 1591, i.e., the year of the copy of *Paris. gr.* 106 by Bevilacqua,¹⁹ if this copy transmitted a text of the VN already partially mutilated, as will be discussed later.

The unusual coincidence of the material gap almost at the same point of the *Bios* in two manuscripts belonging to the same library (*Cryptensis* B.β.II and *Paris. Suppl. gr.* 106) appeared suspicious to Enrica Follieri²⁰ and Stefano Caruso.²¹ Independently from each other, the two scholars surmised an intentional mutilation in the two codices. According to them, a censor would have mutilated the two codices in order to delete the initial part of the last episode during Neilos's stay at St Nazarius. As written above, this part of the story is known only thanks to Sirleto's version. In their reading of this episode, the two scholars understand a reference to a homosexual relationship between an arrogant Langobardic *comes* and a man linked to the monastery of St Nazarius, whether a monk or a lay servant. Obviously, those who have suggested, or later supported, the hypothesis of such censorship *verecundiae gratia* (because of decency) have also tried to establish who might have censured the text, and why. Stefano Caruso thought of "some zealot Catholic, whether internal or external to the *coenobium* of Grottaferrata," who would have been influenced by the post-Tridentine climate counteracting any form of obscenity.²² But it is scarcely credible that someone external to the monastery could have gained free access to a codex in the library, in particular to such an important codex as that containing the *Life* of the very founder. In relation to the admission of external readers to the library, the rigidity of the monks at Grottaferrata in that period is bitterly testified by Jean Chatard. In his prefatory letter to the posthumous publication (1585) of the epistolary of Isidore of Pelusium, a work begun but not completed by Jacques de Billy because of his death on 25 December 1581, and addressed to Jacques's brother, Geoffrey de Billy, Chatard reports the manuscript transmission of the Isidorian epistles and mentions among other things the famous *Cryptensis* codex, today known as B.α.I (Greek 84), which had been recommended to Jacques by Cardinal Antonio Carafa, although Jacques had not considered it for his edition. Jean Chatard wondered if the revision of the letters in the epistolary in this manuscript was different from that in other codices, and regretted not having been able to verify it because of the refusal by the monks in Grottaferrata. In complaining, he resentfully compared the monks to dogs who would not allow others to approach the hay, despite not

feeding on it themselves.²³ Moreover, it is also known that even Sirleto himself had to apply for an explicit permission to the Commendatory Cardinal Alessandro Farnese the Younger in order to borrow the manuscripts,²⁴ even though he was an influential cardinal and about to become official protector of the Basilian monks, and even though he had a close relationship with the monastic community at Grottaferrata.

The ancient codex was clearly considered as a relic, because it reported the life of the founder. For this reason, ripping out from it as much as four pages by someone inside the monastery is utterly inconceivable, even supposing that it might have been done in the name of the licit worries about the defense of morality. This conclusion is equally valid whether one intends such morality to pertain to the ideal of monastic life in general, as Enrica Follieri presupposes,²⁵ or more specifically to the moral status of Bartholomew the Younger, who came to be considered as the author of the *Bios* after the 1586 edition of the *Martyrologium Romanum*, as Stefano Parenti suggests.²⁶ Not to mention that there are other episodes of explicit crudity in the VN, many of which were considered without any doubt 'immoral' from a sixteenth-century religious morality viewpoint, and therefore potentially worthy of censorship; and yet the pages regarding these episodes are not missing. Let us take one example.²⁷ According to the hagiographer, at the age of almost seventy, Neilos was obliged to leave his native land Calabria forever, because of the persisting incursions of the Saracens. He moved north, into the Langobardic territory. He arrived in Capua not much before the death of the Prince Pandulph I (who died in March 981). In the territory of the Capuan principedom, and precisely in the monastery of Valleluce assigned to his community (in today's district of Frosinone), Neilos spent fifteen years. During his stay at Valleluce, Neilos was called to Capua by Pandulph's wife, Aloara (Αλόρα in the Greek text), after his death. She wanted to receive some spiritual solace for the remorse caused her by the murder of a relative. On the way to Aloara's house, Neilos was intercepted by a crowd wanting to honor him and to receive his blessing. Among the people there were also a deaconess, who ran a cloister, together with the other nuns and a young priest who celebrated Mass in the cloister. Prophetically informed about the carnal relationship between the nuns and the priest, Neilos immediately reproached their behavior harshly, as immoral and ignoble for ordained people. This outburst did not lead to repentance for either community, but rather to scornful disdain. The consequences of such an attitude manifested themselves soon after: the hagiographer reports that the following day the priest was caught lying with the sister of the deaconess. The fact became known in the whole city causing great scandal. From a moralizing viewpoint this episode seems to be worthier of censorship than the other one, which at most was about a lay libertine and another person linked to the monastery of St Nazarius (assuming that the hagiographer really alluded to a sexual relationship *contra naturam*

as well). And yet the above-mentioned episode was reported without any ambiguity regarding religious people vowed to chastity: in fact, ff. 126v and 127r of the *Cryptensis* and ff. 95v-96r of the Paris codex, in which the regrettable episode is included, are still there, and one wonders why a hypothetical censor with a moralizing purpose should have spared them.

However, even though the material gap in the two codices could still be thought intentional, it seems to me methodologically appropriate to distinguish two levels, unlike what has been done until now. On the one hand, there is the real content of the episode, together with the previous ones, known only thanks to Sirleto's translation; on the other hand, there is the wrong interpretation that the censor, possibly also acting as the mutilator, might have given to the episode. In my opinion there is no reference to a homosexual relationship in Sirleto's translation. According to my interpretation, the hagiographer only wants to present the figure of a tyrannical despot who considered as his own property everything on his territory: both humans – not hesitating to enslave a man linked to the monastery, deporting him to his palace²⁸ – and material resources, such as the monastery where he used to enter *ad explendum proprium ventrem*, as written in Sirleto's version. In my opinion this phrase is to be understood not as a metaphorical allusion to a sodomitic relationship (rendered as “sordid instincts”), but as the fact that the despot did not hesitate to enter the monastic kitchen, literally, to satisfy his stomach, as if he were in his palace. Moreover, the heterosexuality of the *comes* can be clearly deduced from the rest of the episode. At a certain point in the Greek text – after the omission caused by the lacuna but within the same episode – it is written that the *comes* lived, *more uxorio*, with a woman called μαίνας (literally, ‘Maenad’), who informed him of the riot against him due to the hatred of the oppressed population, which would cause his death. It is well known that in the classical world the Maenads were women in the grip of the ecstatic fury inspired by Dionysius. It is then possible to translate μαίνας as ‘his fury-concubine,’²⁹ but the verbal form referred to the woman in this passage, πορνευομένης, refers more specifically in biblical and patristic Greek to the semantic field of fornication/adultery;³⁰ therefore the phrase αὐτὸς μαθὼν τοῦτο πρὸς τῆς ὑπ’ αὐτοῦ πορνευομένης μαινάδος should be better translated as: “informed of that by the possessed woman who was made by him a trollop”. In any case, this act of fornication concerns a woman, and not a man. The whole episode is clearly an *exemplum*: it is intended to emphasize Neilos's prophetic powers from the beginning of his monastic life (later the saint will give many other signs of this charism). The *comes*, in answer to Neilos's request to release the man unjustly made slave, violently expressed his intention to go on behaving tyrannically for eight of the ten years of life left to him, and to repent only in the last two. Neilos announced to the aggressive *comes* that his life would last not ten years, but actually only ten days. In fact, according to the author of the *VN*, on the tenth day

after having met Neilos, the *comes* truly died, murdered by the oppressed population. What is important for the hagiographer is to underline the arrogant abjection of the *comes*, exceeded by the charismatic figure of the saint. More than ever the whole episode, instead of a faithful account of a real event,³¹ seems to be an *exemplum* taken from the collection of hagiographical Italo-Greek *topoi* (significantly the name of the *comes* is not revealed), since there are some similarities with other *Lives* of Greek saints from Southern Italy. A similar example is found in the *Life* of Nicodemus, a saint who lived in Southern Calabria, in Cellàrana, near today's town of Mammola, on the eastern side of the mountain range of the Serre. In the episode recounted in §16,³² a 'powerful' man (τις τῶν ἐνδόξων) became infatuated with a good-looking but married common woman living in his territory and did not hesitate to abduct her and to bring her violently into his palace. Her husband did not manage to convince the squire to let her go back home; on the advice of a sympathetic man, he went to St Nicodemus, begging him to intercede for him. St Nicodemus, after imploring the squire, was roughly sent away. He therefore predicted the unexpected but rightful intervention of divine providence: in fact, the day after the arrogant squire would suddenly die, "leaving a frightful fame among the generations of the era".³³

The conclusion of the episode in the VN can be more appropriately compared with the epilogue of the riot of John Byzalon,³⁴ written in the *Life* of Elias Speleotes.³⁵ The main figure of the *Bios*, after trying to no avail to persuade the arrogant patrician to give up his rebellion against the imperial government, pronounced a very hard prophecy coming from God: in a year the power of John Byzalon would be entirely pulled down and the patrician would die, murdered by his subordinates. According to the hagiographer, the prediction really happened in the temporal span the saint had given. Therefore I think it is credible that the anonymous author of the VN would have borrowed *topoi* characteristic of hagiographical literature, especially of Italo-Greek origins, and then adapted to the context of his narrative. Such *topoi* make no reference to the realm of homosexuality. Perhaps, the only veiled allusion to it is present in the VN in another famous episode, when Eupraxios, the imperial judge of the Italian *themata* of Langobardy and Calabria, afflicted by a terminal disease, at the point of death was tonsured by Neilos.³⁶ The probable homosexuality of Eupraxios has been noticed with good reason by Stefano Caruso.³⁷ In my opinion, another allusion (not signalled by Caruso) by the hagiographer to the homosexuality of Eupraxios can be found in the definition given about him, when finally Neilos agreed to tonsure the Imperial judge.³⁸

There is no doubt that modern scholars (including at one time myself)³⁹ were induced to attribute erotic overtones to their interpretation of the episode regarding the *comes* in order to justify the apparently unusual coincidence in the textual omission in two manuscripts belonging to the

same library, since the gap in question originated in the same period and concerned almost the same passage of the VN. But how certain is it that the two omissions were caused at one and the same time? Enrica Follieri (followed by Caruso) hypothesizes that Bevilacqua's copy was made in 1591 from C, when this one was still complete, and consequently hypothesizes that in the Paris codex the text of the VN was also initially complete. She adds that the pages in the *Parisinus* were initially not numbered, and only later the four pages fell out due to the censorious interference of Giovanni Battista Ceci.⁴⁰ Only when the manuscript was already mutilated, were the pages foliated. At a later stage, another two pages fell out. According to Enrica Follieri, the Vatican copy was made on the Paris one at its first stage of mutilation by order of Ceci, "in order to provide a text now free from the material traces of the censorship".⁴¹ If we set aside conjectures that have no solid proof, the only certainty is that the part of the text now present in the Vatican codex ought to have been necessarily present in its model, the Paris codex, and *a fortiori* in the *Cryptensis*, in turn model of the Paris codex. Since this portion of text required the space of a single page (obviously the *verso* of the folio), in the *recto* of that sheet, now lost, the initial part of the controversial narrative should have been contained. There is no other certainty that can be drawn from the extant evidence, and it is impossible to know for certain whether the other three lost pages were still present in C or had already fallen, completely or partially, at the time of Bevilacqua's copy in 1591. Leaving to one side of Enrica Follieri's hypothesis, it can be conjectured that Bevilacqua's copy had the same text present in the Vatican manuscript before the loss of ff. 10 and 11 witnessed in the foliation,⁴² since the textual segment present in the Vatican manuscript (which on the other hand the Paris one lacks) corresponds perfectly in length to the gap in the above-mentioned bifolio. In this case the Paris manuscript conveyed an incomplete copy of the VN.⁴³ The hypothesis that the loss of the four pages in the *Cryptensis* manuscript happened not on purpose at the same time because of a censorial cut, but accidentally at different moments, and in particular that the loss of the first three pages happened before Bevilacqua's copy in the year 1591, should provide a valid reason for such a copy: as far as I can see, no such justification has until now been proposed. The reason for this copy was therefore very probably the preservation of such an important document for the history of the Neilian community, a document that suffered damage through continuous use along the centuries.⁴⁴ Bevilacqua's copy would have been designed to replace the ancient codex in the monastery, while another copy was ordered in Rome by the procurator general of the monastery of Grottaferrata, Ceci himself, in order to satisfy the curiosity of scholars who, between the end of the sixteenth and the beginning of the seventeenth century, had "discovered" the hagiographies of the "founder saints". Ceci's copy can be identified as the Roman copy realized in 1605 from P by Casnesios, which was then brought into the popes's library.

At any rate, leaving to one side the causes of the textual gap, whether by censorious mutilation or accidental loss, I believe that, as far as the episode of the Langobardic *comes* in the VN is concerned, it is appropriate to return to a neutral interpretation, free of any sexual overtones, as found in the common scholarly consensus down to the end of the nineteenth century: starting from the vernacular version of the VN by Niccolò Balducci (1628),⁴⁵ it can be still found in the Italian version by Minasi (1892),⁴⁶ and, most recently, in the translation into modern Greek by the nun Maximi.⁴⁷

Notes

- 1 The modern editions of the VN today available are the ones by Germano Giovannelli, *Βίος και πολιτεία τοῦ ὁσίου πατρὸς ἡμῶν Νεΐλου τοῦ Νέου. Testo originale greco e Studio introduttivo (Codice greco criptense B.β.II)*, and by the nun Maximi, *Ὁ ὁσιος Νεΐλος ὁ Καλαβρός. Ὁ Βίος τοῦ ὁσίου Νεΐλου τοῦ Νέου. Εἰσαγωγή–Κριτική ἐκδόσις τοῦ κειμένου–Μετάφρασις–Σχόλια–Υμνογραφικὸ ἔργο ὁσίου*. After many vicissitudes, the posthumous critical edition by Enrica Follieri (edited by Francesco D’Aiuto and myself) is about to be finally published in the series *Testi e Studi Bizantino-neoellenici*. The *editio princeps* of the Greek text (modified by various purist interferences of the editor) was published in Rome in 1624 by the priest and theologian John Matthew Caryophyllis (or Caryophylos, from the double Greek form Καρυοφύλλης / Καρυόφυλος) and later re-edited (with various modifications) first in 1760, in the seventh volume of the *Acta Sanctorum Septembris* and later in volume nr. 120 of the *Patrologia Graeca* by Migne, Paris 1864: on this edition and its reissues see Fyrigos 1987 and 1989.
- 2 Luzzi 2004, 176–7.
- 3 Surely there were other manuscripts including the VN, for example the one used for the reading of the Neilian *Bios* during the meal in the famous monastery of St Mary of Patir at Rossano in Calabria, mentioned in the local *typikon*: see Parenti 1998, 90 and n. 38. But, as far as we know, they are lost.
- 4 On the Grottaferrata codex, see Follieri 2000b, 124–8, and Parenti 1998, with earlier bibliography.
- 5 The VN is contained at ff. 1r – 118v of the Paris codex (together with the *Lives* of St Bartholomew the Younger, ff. 119r – 138r, and of St John Theristes, ff. 140r – 147v); on this manuscript see Follieri 1997, 72–3; Astruc *et al.* 2003, 236–8; on the copyist Paolo Bevilacqua see Lucà 2004, 188–9 and n. 22, with earlier bibliography. This manuscript was surely still in the *coenobium* of Grottaferrata in 1654, as witnessed in a note on the last folio of the codex (see Follieri 1997, 82 n. 47). There may be further evidence of its later permanence at the monastery, at least until the 1760s–70s, in an epigram in five dodecasyllables, which Stefano Parenti ascribes to the hieromonk Nicola Olivieri, who died in 1781: Parenti 2005, 91 n. 43. The epigram is written on the *recto* of a fragmentary folio placed at the front of the Paris manuscript. It sings the praises of the ascetic Neilos from Ankyra, homonym of Neilos from Rossano. Enrica Follieri has hypothesized that the codex was brought to France during the Napoleonic occupation of the Vatican State in the very last years of the eighteenth century (1798–99), when, by order of Napoleon, all the codices and books of the library of the abbey of Grottaferrata were brought to Frascati, where the institution of a great national library was planned: see Follieri 1997, 82 n. 47.

- 6 On the Vatican manuscript and in particular on its first codicological unit, see Follieri 1997, 73–4. It is not known when the section of the codex including the VN became property of the papal library. Domenico Surace has recently proposed to identify the copyist with a relative of Cardinal Giulio Antonio Santoro, the bishop of Corfù Acacius Casnesios, who died in 1619 after being *scriptor graecus* of the Vatican Library since 1 June 1594: see Surace 2013, 344 n. 42. This copy was probably made by Casnesios in the first months of the year 1605, if a note in the accounts book (“Libro Mastro”) of the abbey of Grottaferrata refers to this copy. In the note, dated 30 April 1605, a sum of 25 *julii* is recorded for the copies in Rome of the *Lives* of St Neilos and St Bartholomew, by order of the Procurator General Giovanni Battista Ceci (about whose commission see Follieri 1997, 90–1).
- 7 In Follieri 1997, 83–5, some omissions and mistakes in P are considered as an unequivocal proof of the derivation of P from C, due to passages that were difficult to read in C.
- 8 Follieri 1997, 83, has pointed to an important element regarding the derivation of V from P, that is the fact that the copyist of the Vatican manuscript “during his transcription erroneously turned two pages rather than one. Therefore he omitted the passage contained in the two half-folios, respectively the *verso* and the *recto* of two consecutive folios. After realizing the omission he restored the lost passage on the margin of f. 6v. The two side pages, first omitted and then restored, correspond to the content of ff. 11v (now lost) and 12r (preserved) in P, and the adding of the restored text (marked by the copyist of V with a little cross) exactly corresponds to the beginning of f. 12v of P”. To this observation by Follieri, it is now possible to add another element, typologically different but important, in order to confirm the direct derivation of the Vatican codex from the Paris one. To explain it better, first of all I quote the passage of the VN in question according to Giovanelli’s edition, *Βίος και πολιτεία*, 112–13 (§ 73): “Καὶ συντόμως εἰπεῖν, ὥσπερ ποτὲ τοῖς Ἰσραηλίταις τὸ μάννα ἐκάστω πρὸς τὴν κρᾶσιν καὶ τὴν ὄρεξιν μετεβάλλετο, διὸ καὶ οὐκ ἦν ἐν ταῖς φυλαῖς αὐτῶν ὁ ἀσθενῶν, οὕτω κἀν τοῦτοις ὁ θαυμαστός διεγίγνετο.” At the end of the sixth line from the top on f. 42r, the copyist of V writes *μετε* and then, at the beginning of the following line, *αὐτῶν βάλλετο*, later dividing the two words using square brackets and premising to *αὐτῶν* a *signe de renvoi*, repeated after the following *φυλαῖς*. In this way, he reproduces what happens in P at the beginning of the sixth line of f. 88v, where *αὐτῶν*, evidently forgotten by Bevilacqua during the copying, is later restored on the border near] *βάλλετο* and referred to *φυλαῖς* through a *signe de renvoi*. There are also other elements, which confirm that the copyist of the Vatican manuscript took the Paris codex as model. A first category is represented by the textual and graphic marginal comments in P (absent or different in C), accurately reproduced in V: *πατρίς* as marginal note corresponding to the *incipit* of the “praise” to Neilos’s homeland (ed. Giovanelli, 48 [§ 2]), Rossano (P, f. 2r; V, f. 1v; this marginal note is absent in C); a graphic marginal note representing a stylized hand indicating an important passage of the VN (ed. Giovanelli, 62 [§ 14]): in this note the hagiographer declares that he will tell in the *Life* only the few exploits recounted by Neilos himself *προτροπῆς ἕνεκα τῆς ἡμῶν προθυμίας τῆς εἰς τὰ κρεῖττω* (“as exhortation for our inclination to the good”) (P, f. 18v; V, f. 9v; but in C, at f. 33v, there is a textual marginal note referred to this passage: see Parenti 2005, 87–9); “*n.b.*” written by Bevilacqua through the marginal abbreviation *ση(μείωσαι)* [or *ση(μείωσον)*] at f. 79r of P, referred to the gnomic passage of the VN that says: Πᾶς γὰρ ὁ ἔτοιμος εἰς εὐορκίαν ταχὺς εἰς ψευδολογίαν, ὥσπερ

καὶ τὸ ἀνάπαλιν (“everyone who is easily ready to swear is fast to perjure, and the contrary too”), ed. Giovanelli, *Βίος καὶ πολιτεία*, 106 (§ 65): this abbreviation is reproduced also in V at the margin of f. 38r, while in C there are no notes in correspondence with this passage; marginal marks (absent in C) for direct speech in the form of low quotation marks, single in P and double in V. Moreover, the copyist of the Vatican codex also accurately reproduced the characters in *ekthesis* present in the Paris codex, which were used to signal the division of the text into sections, often not corresponding to those in the *Cryptensis* manuscript.

- 9 On the reasons for this move to Langobardic territory beyond the boundaries of the Byzantine *Themata* in Southern Italy, see Follieri 2000a, 15–16.
- 10 There is the possibility that such numbers (thirty years, forty days), strictly connected to the theme of the *imitatio Christi*, were devised on purpose by the hagiographer in order to establish a mystical connection between Neilos and Christ: see Luzzi 2004, 185.
- 11 Precisely f. 9v of the Paris manuscript ends with the words ὁ τῶν δικαίων ἐχθρὸς καὶ φησι – see ed. Giovanelli, *Βίος καὶ πολιτεία*, 53 (§ 7) – while the following folio begins with the words πορνευο]μένης μαινάδος (the integration πορνευο] was made later): see ed. Giovanelli, 57 (§ 9).
- 12 To be put in the tenth line from the bottom at f. 6r of the codex, between the words τὴν χρεῖαν ἀπεπλήρου – see ed. Giovanelli, 54 (§ 8) – and λόγοις παρακλητικοῖς καὶ – see ed. Giovanelli, p. 56 (§ 9). One cannot tell whether the copyist of the Vatican codex realized that there was a textual omission at that point, since the vertical stroke drawn in pencil and repeated in the margin, now visible and exactly indicating the point of the gap, is clearly modern.
- 13 It concerns the part of the text from λόγοις παρακλητικοῖς to ἀναίσθησις πολλῇ: see ed. Giovanelli, 56–7 (§ 9).
- 14 About Sirleto, and in particular on his relationship with the Vatican Library and Roman literary circles, see Lucà 2012.
- 15 Sirleto’s version of the VN in manuscript *Vat. lat.* 6151 was transcribed during the seventeenth century by Jean Durand, a Benedictine of the confraternity of St Maurus, who died in 1690. This version was later edited, with some modifications (compared with the Vatican codex), by two other members of the same confraternity, Dom Edmond Martène and Dom Ursin Durand. It was published in the sixth volume of the *Veterum scriptorum amplissima collectio*, Paris 1729. I have dealt with the Sirleto’s version in a forthcoming paper. Meanwhile, see Renzo 1989, esp. p. 161, where he declares: “From the dating of the two copies, *Vatic.* 1205 and [*Paris.*] *supplementum graecum* 106 (1566–1591) it is possible to assume that the four missing pages (ff. 25–28 of the B.β.II) were lost before 1566 and after Sirleto’s version, which is therefore antecedent and probably datable to the period when he was working on Symeon Metaphrastes’ *Saints’ Lives*.” One must note, however, that the first codicological unit of the Vatican manuscript containing the VN is wrongly dated by Renzo to 1566 (in fact, this dating can only correctly refer to another codicological unit of V).
- 16 In 1624: see above, n. 1.
- 17 See above, n. 6.
- 18 On Federico Mezio, see Ceresa 2010. His translation of the VN into Latin was based on the Greek manuscript *Crypt.* B.β.II in which the gap was already present: see Follieri 1997, 77–8. Mezio made the Latin version between 1568 and 1602: see Follieri 1991, 273–4. I refer to Mezio’s manuscript tradition, for a long time thought lost, in my forthcoming paper.

- 19 See above, n. 5
- 20 See Follieri 1997, 86–90.
- 21 Caruso 1998.
- 22 Caruso 1998, 192–3.
- 23 “Illustriss(imus) et eruditiss(imus) Cardinalis Carafa fratrem tuum (quem nomine virtutis et literarum amabat plurimum) literis aliquando monuit, ipsius Isidori Epistolas ad mille quingentas reperiri in Coenobio Cryptae Ferratae, qui locus in fide ac tutela est Cardinalis Farnesii. Eadem ne, an diuersae ab illis sint, mihi quoque obscurum et incertum est. Ita enim reconduntur et abduntur, vt plane sepultae videantur, suntque Bibliothecarii nonnulli canibus haud dissimiles, qui foeno incubantes, cum ipsi non edant, nec alios quoque edere, vel etiam propius accedere non permittunt, locum dantes Prouerbio: Canis in praesepe”: Isidore of Pelusion 1585, †IVv. This passage of the dedicatory epistle of Chatard is quoted more or less fully in Évieux 1975, 45; Backus 1993, 138 n. 69; Isidore of Pelusion 1997, ed. Évieux, 130 n. 4 and Parenti 2005, 410 (however, the latter confuses Jean Chatard with Jacques de Billy and ascribes by mistake to the second the anger against the librarians in the *coenobium* of Grottaferrata).
- 24 It is explicitly testified by Sirleto’s letter to Giacomo Stassi quoted in Lucà 2012, 188 n. 255.
- 25 She has proposed to ascribe the censorious interference to Giovanni Battista Ceci (master of the novices in 1600, visitor in 1603 and prior regent of the *coenobium* of Grottaferrata from 1605 to 1608): see Follieri 1997, 90–2.
- 26 See Parenti 2005, 96.
- 27 The episode can be read in ed. Giovanelli, *Bíos kai πολιτεία*, 118 (§§ 79–80).
- 28 In the corresponding passage of Sirleto’s version – quoted in the transcription from codex *Vat. lat.* 6151 by Caruso, “Un tabù etico e filologico,” 182 – can be read: “utens au(tem) tyrannide atq(ue) arrogantia, seruituti subiecit jnnocentem animam cuiusdam, quj ad illum monasterium ubi beatus Nilus versabatur, pertinebat.”
- 29 This translation is proposed by Giovanelli 1966, 25.
- 30 In Lampe, col. 1122, the following meanings of the verb πορνεύω are given: 1. *fornicate*, 2. linked with, but dist. from, μοιχεύω in catechetical instruction, 3. ref. illicit intercourse committed by married people, hence = *commit adultery*, 4. of a woman who presumes her husband’s death and re-marries, 5. of those marrying irregularly, 6. dist. from polygamous marrying of patriarchs, 7. *behave unchastely*, 8. met., *be unfaithful to God; apostatize*.
- 31 On the various passages in which the anonymous hagiographer did not hesitate to modify the reality for catechetical purposes, see Luzzi 2004. One ought to remember that the episode of the Langobardic *comes* is antecedent to Neilos’s move to St Adrian near Rossano in the mid-tenth century: ed. Giovanelli, *Bíos kai πολιτεία*, 82 (§ 36). After Neilos’s move there is a better historical concreteness in the VN, while almost all the persons in the first part of the VN seem symbolic characters of an ascetic itinerary: see Luzzi 2004, 181 and 88.
- 32 Ed. with translation into Italian by Arco Magrì 1969, 121–5.
- 33 The two episodes of the VN and of the *Vita Nicodemi* are taken into consideration comparatively in Cilento 1996, 38 and Caruso 1998, 179–80 n. 23.
- 34 On the *strategos* of the Calabrian *thema* see von Falkenhausen 1978, 102–3; *Prosopographie der mittelbyzantinischen Zeit*, s.v. “Ioannes Byzalon,” vol. 3: Ignatios (#22713) – Lampadius (#4268), 143 (#934).

- 35 See *Vita s. Eliae Spelaeotae*, ed. Stillingh 1750, 870 (§ 54); Strazzeri 1992, 68. The episode is also mentioned, even though not in relation to the one in the VN, in Cilento 1996, 39.
- 36 Ed. Giovanelli, *Βίος και πολιτεία*, 95–8 (§§ 53–56). On this figure see von Falkenhausen 1989, 281–3; *Prosopographie der mittelbyzantinischen Zeit*, s.v. “Eupraxios,” vol. 3: Christophoros (#21279) – Ignatios (#2712), 263 (#807).
- 37 See Caruso 2004, 151 n. 30 and Caruso 2006, 206 nn. 14 and 17, relying on the paragraph: Πάθος γάρ τι τὸ λεγόμενον γάγγραινα περὶ τὸν βάλανον τοῦ παιδογόνου μορίου αὐτοῦ ἐκφύεν, τῶν μὲν ἱατρῶν ἀπρακτον διήλεγγε τὴν περιδοεῖαν, δίκας δὲ εἰσπράττετο τὸ τῆς ἀσωτίας ὄργανον, δι’ ὧν ἀκρατῶς τὸν τῆς φύσεως νόμον ἐξύβρισεν (“in fact a disease called gangrene, appeared around the gland in his genitalia, rendered ineffective the cure the doctors gave him, and punished the organ of the dissolution, because it broke, intemperate, **the natural law**”).
- 38 Ed. Giovanelli, *Βίος και πολιτεία*, 97 (beginning § 56): τὰ τῆ σεμνῇ ταπεινώσει δεδοξασμένα ῥάκη περιεβάλετο, τὸν ἀπαλῇ καὶ περιρρεοῦσῃ ἐσθῆτι πρώην μαλακίζόμενον (“he covered with the glorified rags of the chaste humility the one, who previously languidly wrapped himself up in a soft and long garment”). Indeed, as signalled in Kriaras 1968–2012, Vol. IX, 1985, 304–5, the participle of the verb μαλακίζω sometimes has the adjectival meaning of μαλακός (which can also signify κίναϊδος, “pederast”).
- 39 Luzzi 2004, 181 and n. 28.
- 40 See above, n. 25.
- 41 Follieri 1997, 92.
- 42 But this foliation probably was not written by Bevilacqua, since he used to number the folios of the codices, which he copied, with Greek rather than Arabic numbers.
- 43 The only and undoubtedly not small difficulty in this alternative reconstruction is represented by the individuation of a plausible reason, in order to justify the omission by Bevilacqua of almost three pages of C, which are still now legible in the ancient manuscript from the end of the fifth line from the top of f. 23v, τοῦ σώ[ματος] (ed. Giovanelli, *Βίος και πολιτεία*, 53 [§ 7]), to the last line of f. 24v, ἐκρυσαν παγίδα μοι τῇ δέ (ed. Giovanelli, 54 [§ 9]), and the omission of the *recto* of the last of the four pages in C, now missing, but about whose existence in Bevilacqua’s period we are sure (see above).
- 44 Also in Father Germano Giovanelli’s opinion the mutilation in the *Cryptensis* codex could be determined by wear and tear: see *ibid.*, 35.
- 45 The episode on the Langobardic *comes* is significantly present in both editions of the translation by Niccolò Balducci, “Vita di S. Nilo fondatore del Monasterio di Grotta Ferrata. Scritta in lingua volgare da N. B. d’ordine dell’Ill.mo & R.mo Signor Cardinale Francesco Barberino Abate commendatario del medesimo Monastero” – see Follieri 1991 –, including in the one purged on moral grounds. Such inclusion proves that in the first decades of the seventeenth century this episode was not considered scandalous, or else it would have been deleted in the second edition, as it happened with the above-mentioned episode regarding the nuns and the priest of Capua. In the first edition, which I consulted in the exemplar preserved in the Vatican Library and shelf-marked Stamp.Barb.U.V.64 (in 4°), the episode can be read at pp. 15–16; in the second edition (the purged one, published some months later), which I consulted in the exemplar, shelf-marked Stamp.Barb.T.VII.29 (in 8°), preserved in the same library, it can be read at pp. 20–2.
- 46 See Minasi 1892, 144–6 with n. 10 at pp. 289–90.
- 47 See ed. Maximi 1991, 97.

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13 East meets West, West meets East?

Constructing difference in the *First Life of St Adalbert* and in the *Life of St Neilos*

David Kalhous

In the *First Life of St Adalbert*, written a few years after the saint's death, we read about his visit to Italy. By traveling to Jerusalem, St Adalbert demonstrated his fascination with monastic forms of life, and he later decided to enter the monastery and become a monk. Although his first experience with monasticism in Monte cassino was not a positive one, this did not turn him against the monastic life, as recorded in his *First Life*. His second attempt to become a monk also did not end well. In this case, St Neilos, who on one hand was pleased with St Adalbert's interest in being part of his community, nevertheless, on the other hand, warned Adalbert that he, Neilos, was not only subordinated to Monte cassino, but was also different – he was Greek. Does this mean that there was an East-West barrier that could not have been crossed? To be able to answer this question, we have to analyze not only the *First Life of St Adalbert*, but also compare its *Vorstellungswelt* with the *Life of St Neilos* and its idea of otherness and of ideal monastic life.

From the start we can see St Adalbert and St Neilos must have been very different men, since they acquired different positions in the church hierarchy and faced different problems. St Adalbert was elected second bishop of Prague and attempted to cultivate an area where the Christian religion was still a new, fresh set of ideas, primarily understood to be a part of elite culture. In contrast, St Neilos was born in Southern Italy, ruled by the Byzantine empire, which had embraced Christianity hundreds of years before. It was Southern Italy, and the eremitical 'movement' of which St Neilos was part, that later inspired new reform movements focused on severe discipline.¹ To understand the career of St Adalbert, we will need to scrutinize his sources and more carefully compare them to the sources pertaining to St Neilos, because the existence of more texts available for comparison provides us with different perspectives and makes us aware of discrepancies that challenge the traditional image of St Adalbert, which itself is in need of a thorough revision.

St Adalbert-Vojtěch and his *Life*

The sources

Although two *Vitae*² and one *Passio*³ dealing with St Adalbert were composed shortly after his death (999 or 1004), these hagiographical texts offer no more than vague biographical clues; the *Quattuor imensi iacet* legend is considered a late text,⁴ and the few existing annalistic records and documents⁵ likewise fail to provide more than a limited amount of information about the chronology of Adalbert's life. In order to learn more about Adalbert himself, it is necessary to turn to his alleged 'inheritance' and, more importantly, his own literary works.⁶ A dedication included in the prologue of Christian's work is the only contemporary evidence of Adalbert's importance in the context of his times.⁷

St Adalbert was identified as the author of a *Passio Gorgonii* that is preserved in a twelfth-century manuscript, now in Knihovna státního Zámku Kynžvart, sign. 20 D22/II, fol. 171a-173b, accompanied by a letter for Milo, bishop of Minden, also written by St Adalbert.⁸ Traditionally, a homily on St Alexiuos is ascribed to St Adalbert as well.⁹

St Adalbert's Life: Problems of Chronology

Vojtěch, known in Western and Central Europe as St Adalbert, was born in Libice, which is now a small town 60 km east of Prague. In the tenth century, however, it was a lively center and powerful fortress of the Slavník-clan. Both Adalbert's ordination as a bishop in 983 and his confirmation by his namesake Adalbert, the future archbishop of Magdeburg, in 961,¹⁰ suggest that St Adalbert was born into the family of the noble Slavník and his wife Střezislava around the year 953.¹¹ As most of the bishops in the early Middle Ages were of aristocratic origin, his election is a strong argument for the high status of his family, even though we are not able to discern the relationship of his family with other noble lineages in contemporary Europe. We can believe the legendary *topoi* that his life had been consecrated to God from a very early age, as he received a corresponding education.¹² Following a period of domestic training, in all likelihood delivered by a priest at the court of his father Slavník, he was sent to study in Magdeburg, an important center of the Ottonian dynasty in Eastern Saxony, in 972, accompanied by his loyal companion (not his teacher) Radla.¹³ There, Master Oktrik provided Adalbert with an education.¹⁴ However, following the death of Archbishop Adalbert and the departure of Master Oktrik¹⁵ – summoned to the emperor's chancery – Adalbert returned home. He allegedly arrived in Prague bearing the ordination of subdeacon.¹⁶ Thietmar, the first bishop of Prague, died on 2 January 983;¹⁷ by 19 February, Boleslav II, the Bohemians

and the clergy had all agreed on Adalbert – possibly a Prague canon at the time – as his successor. Cosmas asserts that, in non-traditional and perhaps even symbolic fashion, the selection procedure itself took place in Levý Hradec,¹⁸ i.e., ‘the very birthplace of [Bohemian] Christianity’ according to one document.¹⁹ Adalbert subsequently left Bohemia for Italy to receive investiture at the hands of Emperor Otto II; he was subsequently ordained in Verona on the Feast of St Peter and St Paul (June 29) by Willigis, Archbishop of Mainz.²⁰ His later activity as a bishop will be analyzed below.

In St Adalbert’s times, Bohemia was already united under the rule of Přemyslid princes who built their hegemony in Bohemia during the tenth century. Bohemian Christianity of his times was more than 100 years old, as the written sources mention the baptism of princes from Bohemia in Regensburg 845,²¹ and we also read in a late tenth-century legend that Přemyslid prince Bořivoj († ca. 889) was baptized by St Methodius in the court of the Moravian prince Svatopluk (870–894).²² There was also a newly founded bishopric in Prague (976), whose second bishop St Adalbert became, and a renewed see in Moravia that followed the tradition of one of the late great moravian bishoprics founded in 900.²³

The number of the churches built in the Czech lands up to 1200 that are known from written sources is not high (115 including collegiate chapters and monasteries).²⁴ Nevertheless, chronicler Helmold ca. 1150 calls Bohemia a ‘land full of churches and religious,’²⁵ and we can be sure that many churches remained unnoticed by contemporary written records. We can also count many churches that survived as buildings or remnants, but only later found their way into historical records, as different kinds of episcopal records started to be kept since the episcopacy of Arnošt of Pardubice (1343–64), first archbishop of Prague. In the fourteenth century, historians register more than three thousand parishes in Czech lands, i.e., one for every 25 square kilometers. It is difficult to determine the chronology of these churches as we can only use art historical analysis, which is not precise, and the difference between our estimation and the real age of a building can be more than 50 years. It is also assumed that many early medieval churches in the Czech lands were made from timber and did not therefore survive in their original form to the present day. We know of such a phase for the Benedictine monasteries Ostrov or Sázava, both near Prague.²⁶ We now have proof that in the Czech lands in the early Middle Ages there were also churches built with mixed technique, i.e., from wood that was then covered by stones.²⁷

As legend-writers associate Adalbert’s first trip to Rome with the stay of Empress Theophano in Italy,²⁸ the *terminus ante quem* may be established with some precision. Theophano set out for Italy at the close of 989 in order to celebrate Christmas in Rome.²⁹ She must have started her northbound journey sometime in March 990, as she subsequently managed to issue a document in her name in Ravenna on 1 April 990.³⁰

Therefore, Adalbert must have been in Rome prior to March 990. If one accepts Voigt's premise regarding the year-long novitiate, and if the five years spent in a monastery refers to Adalbert's monkhood in general, it is impossible to maintain the traditional chronology established by Voigt.³¹ It would mean that Adalbert arrived in Rome in the second half of 989 and became a Benedictine, in conflict with assertions made in the *Annales Pragenses* which specifies a date either at the beginning of 991 or, more likely, in the spring of 992.

We have thus far contested the chronology of Adalbert's life, sketched out the possible reasons for his second escape from the country, and drawn attention to discrepancies between information found in the legends and in contemporary sources; however, the reasons for his first departure remain unclear. This is all the more serious since these reasons – along with a number of other theories – have sparked some rather rash hypotheses regarding late tenth-century power relations in Bohemia (as well as throughout Central Europe in general).

St Adalbert's Journey South

Adalbert's first journey to Rome is interpreted by a considerable amount of historiography to be the result of his excessive ambition. It is said that Adalbert was an enthusiastic reformer and radically unfit for newly Christianized countries who, attempting to carry too large a load, simply could not cope, and eventually sought solace in flight and finally in contemplation in a monastery among his equals. This corresponds to the diction of the *First Life*, which endeavors to portray Adalbert as a monk. The author of the *First Vita* writes that Adalbert, disgusted by his failures, took the advice of his provost Wilik and set out for Rome at the close of 989 in search of counsel.³² We are also told that St Adalbert had a plan to make a pilgrimage to Jerusalem.³³ That this was one of his goals is partially confirmed by his itinerary. Bruno mentions that he happened to stop at Monte cassino, where he was told that the key to reaching 'salvation and glory lies not in arriving in Jerusalem, but in living in Jerusalem well.'³⁴ Both these goals, pilgrimage to Jerusalem and visiting the pope in Rome, do not necessarily exclude each other. We also have to take into consideration that during his absence his diocese was governed by Volkold, Bishop of Meissen. Lacking Adalbert's approval, he would have had no way to help: working outside of one's own diocese without the permission of the local diocesan bishop was strictly forbidden by Church law.³⁵

However, there is a major problem with the line of reasoning that describes his visit of Rome as a flight, namely in respect to canon law. It is essential to remember that a bishop fleeing his diocese would have seriously violated canon law, resulting in his removal from office – even in the Early Middle Ages.³⁶ Even if Adalbert did have a legitimate reason

for making this step, as proposed by Voigt, it would not alter the fact that Adalbert would simply cease to be bishop of Prague;³⁷ the Bohemians would go on to choose a new one. Likewise, in the case of his abdication, it would be impossible to pressure him to return with the help of the archbishop of Mainz. Thus, it would be impossible for him to neglect his duties: he would simply no longer be in office. Furthermore, what reasons could possibly have led the prince and the Bohemians to search for a bishop they deemed troublesome? The most probable explanation seems to be that St Adalbert's travels were well prepared before he left, and he was asked to come back only after Volkold nearly died and was not able to govern St Adalbert's see anymore. In that moment, the Bohemians, remembering their bishop, sent out a legation led by Adalbert's former teacher Radla, and Strachkvas, a monk and brother to the prince and brought St Adalbert back to Prague.³⁸

On confronting the two oldest Adalbertian legends, one is immediately struck by their contradictory and fragmented nature. The narratives we are presented with are similar, but differ in significant details. Moreover, both accounts feature a certain inner tension: while Bruno describes the return of the ring and crosier,³⁹ without knowing whether Adalbert had met with the pope prior to the event, the author of the *First Vita* depicts a meeting with the pope⁴⁰ but never mentions Adalbert retrieving his ring and crosier. However, these contradictions may be attributed to a certain lack of order in the narrative and an inability to cope with the subject matter.

For the second time, Adalbert 'escaped' to Rome only in the autumn of 995. September 28, 995⁴¹ remains the key date. On that day Libice was stormed and Adalbert's brothers slain. Adalbert never resumed his charge in Prague after this, as indicated by an account of his monastic stay prior to the crowning of the emperor.⁴² A curse Adalbert placed on Bohemians, or perhaps only on the perpetrators of the murders, his true enemies (as mentioned by Thietmar), may be seen as indirectly confirming the hypothesis of Adalbert's escape in connection with the events of the autumn of 995.⁴³ May 25, 996 was the beginning of a synod in Rome, organized by the new pope where St Adalbert's case was most probably discussed, remains the only relatively reliable *datum ante quem*.⁴⁴

The following chronological diagram thus follows from the above reasoning:

Table 13.1 A comparative chronology of St Adalbert's life

	<i>Voigt's chronology</i>	<i>Suggested chronology</i> ⁴⁵
First stay in Rome	988–992	End of 989 – first half of 992
Second stay in Rome	994–996	Autumn 995–996

This brings up the question of the responsibility for the storming of Libice, as well as problems associated with the interpretation of Adalbertian legends in general, and Adalbert's first journey to Rome in particular. Bruno's explanation is very explicit: in his opinion, the crime must be attributed to the notorious Přemyslid cruelty which had previously cost St Wenceslaus his life.⁴⁶ Bruno's concept of the course of events thus falls short of depicting a 'true and faithful account' of the course of events, and instead represents a transformation of historical memory with respect to Adalbert's death, which placed (or at least could have placed) a kind of barrier between the Přemyslids and St Adalbert, separating them in order to associate the life story of the martyr with the emperor and Poland instead.⁴⁷ This concept is in all probability based on the notion that it was a ruler's responsibility, in this case Boleslav II's, to maintain peace and order in his country – and thus Boleslav should be held indirectly responsible for the fate of Adalbert's brothers.

It thus seems that Adalbert left the country in connection with the attack on Libice sometime during the autumn of 995.⁴⁸ The event should not be interpreted as the climax of long-standing animosity between the Přemyslid and Slavnik dynasties; instead, it is the outcome of Adalbert's attempts at defending Church law (and the position of the bishop in particular)⁴⁹ against 'provincial' law.⁵⁰ The leading men of the damaged noble dynasty misinterpreted this as a declaration of open hostilities and acted accordingly. We cannot rule out the possibility that the conflict was no more than the culmination of a disagreement between the bishop – striving for more power over the Church – the noblemen, and the part of the clergy who were interested in maintaining sovereignty over their own churches. This hypothesis is corroborated by the nobles's threats recorded (and as far as the actual content goes most likely fabricated) by Bruno⁵¹ as well as the intentions on the part of the archbishop of Mainz to send Adalbert back to Prague.

Adalbert allegedly did not stay in Rome for long. Instead of returning to Bohemia or even dispatching a courier to Prague, he accompanied the emperor on his trip across the Alps to Aachen⁵² and from there into present-day France, paying his respects at the graves of St Martin in Tours, St Denis in Paris, and St Benedict in Fleury Abbey.⁵³ From France he returned to the imperial court and allegedly experienced the first vision of his own martyrdom – or, in any case, this was how his dream was interpreted by Leo of Vercelli.⁵⁴ Adalbert subsequently left the emperor for Gniezno and the court of Polish Prince Bolesław I the Brave (992–1025). Only then was the court in Prague contacted: Piast couriers came to inquire whether Adalbert was still wanted in Prague.⁵⁵ However, Bohemia no longer desired Adalbert's return, as Bohemians allegedly feared that he would avenge the death of his brothers.⁵⁶ There was nothing left for Adalbert to do but to embark on a voyage which would eventually take him to his martyrdom and 'eternal glory.' Fate caught up to him in Prussia on 23–24 April 997.⁵⁷

St Adalbert as a bishop: Bohemian Christianity ca. 1000 and its problems

Let us return to the text of the legend and examine the image of Adalbert's actions in Bohemia. In both hagiographical and critical-historiographical literature, Adalbert is generally portrayed as a purely spiritual figure whose commitment to the concept of an ideal church completely obscures his outlook on reality, bringing him into conflict with the surrounding 'barbarian society.' The author of the *First Vita* as well as Bruno of Querfurt use them to stylize Adalbert as a model bishop and also emphasize his indifference to earthly possessions and his efforts to live a simple and ascetic life. Bruno even mentions that Adalbert's life was more severe than that of monks, and notes his endeavors at arranging for the transformation and reapportionment of episcopal pensions, while completely bypassing his pastoral work. The efforts to excuse this side of Adalbert by emphasizing his asceticism creates the impression that this excuse was not an empty phrase or the work of Adalbert's pragmatic advisors.⁵⁸ Indications of his ascetic zeal are also evident in his exhortation in the homily on St Alexius.⁵⁹ If we compare this aspect of his image with the image of holy bishops in other contemporary texts, the unusual nature of his asceticism seems even clearer.⁶⁰

We do not know a lot about the situation in Bohemia at the end of tenth century, and what we do know, we read in the legends about St Adalbert that were written by contemporaries who looked upon Bohemia with certain enmity: we have already been made aware of the problems connected with such biased evidence. As mentioned above, St Adalbert is seen in modern historiography as an unsuccessful reformer whose expectations were set too high and who was, as such, condemned to failure.⁶¹

The main argument for the hypothesis according to which St Adalbert was a radical and unsuccessful reformer are based on his flights from Prague, seen as a consequence of his conflicts with the Bohemian elite and its prince Boleslav II (972–999). These departures were attested to not only in the legends, but also, indirectly, by the agreement made between St Adalbert, the Bohemian elite, and Boleslav II of Bohemia, whereby Boleslav and all Bohemian aristocracy granted Adalbert the right to dissolve invalid marriages, establish churches and collect tithes.⁶² This evidence is also partially supported by the text of the prayer to the priests, newly ascribed to St Adalbert, that we can now read in the same manuscript in which we find the above-mentioned agreement: MS Stiftsbibliothek Heiligenkreuz 217,⁶³ written in the tenth century in what is today southern Germany.⁶⁴ In this prayer, St Adalbert exhorts his clergy not to live in mortal sin any more and argues that it is meaningless for priests to admonish people for their sins, while they live against the rules themselves.⁶⁵ As we cast doubts upon the traditional explanation of these escapes to Italy, and the previous analysis also made us aware that his

relationship with the prince was peaceful rather than full of conflicts, we need to examine the evidence and find out whether or not St Adalbert was really that radical a reformer. A closer look at the agreement between him, Boleslav II and the Bohemian nobility reveals that its contents only partially correspond to Adalbert's objectives as recounted in legends: they both comment on the sale of Christian slaves to infidels, marriages among the clergy and polygamy among laymen;⁶⁶ separately, they also mention a new classification of the episcopal tithe.⁶⁷ Only Bruno pointed out the failure to observe holy days.

The most detailed examination of St Adalbert's reform program, as it was conceived of by contemporary hagiographers, was conducted in 2014 by eminent historian Roman Michałowski, who not only compared each requirement ascribed to Adalbert with the decrees of contemporary Church synods and councils, but also took into consideration the *Ammonitio* mentioned above.⁶⁸ However, we can still dig one level deeper and ask whether we should not enlarge the group of texts we take into consideration about contemporary discourse of Church law. Even though it is very important to follow the synods and councils in the context of the period of time they were summoned, as Michałowski did, we should not forget that even Church law did not consist of a strictly defined corpus of texts, where later decisions necessarily derogated the previous ones, but we should imagine it more like a soup, a fluid, fuzzy set of decisions once made and from time to time renewed or just re-membered. Furthermore, these laws were often collected together with episcopal capitularies and with royal decrees or capitularies either in the collections with their own *Überlieferung* (Ansegis), or on the manuscript level, or both. Many of them were copied from the ninth through the twelfth centuries all over Western or Central Europe. We should not be very surprised that one of these manuscripts was also the same MS Heiligenkreuz 217⁶⁹ where the *Ammonitio* and also the Agreement between St Adalbert, the Bohemians, and their Prince is preserved (fol. 76), together with the letter for archbishop Methodius *Quia de zelo fidei sanctorum* of pope Stephen V (885–891) with the final decision about the liturgy in Old Church Slavonic in Moravia.⁷⁰ Whereas these three records might be seen as clues that this manuscript was used in a Bohemian milieu, most of the folios are filled with Carolingian legislation, either royal, or ecclesiastical, including episcopal capitularies issued by Theodulf of Orléans (125v–132v),⁷¹ Hinkmar of Rheims (132v–138v),⁷² decisions accepted in Worms 868 (10r6–152v),⁷³ and Ansegis' collection (205r–265r).⁷⁴ Other kinds of texts are also represented, such as the decrees of the council of Nicea (276r–282v),⁷⁵ and a collection of penitentiaries (30v–41v) with the tract *De remediis peccatorum* probably written by Bede (45r–54v).⁷⁶

Even though the content of that manuscript indicates that St Adalbert was deeply anchored in the legal and ecclesiastical culture of his times,⁷⁷ influenced by a Carolingian vision of the *correctio* or reformed

life, comparison with other episcopal *Vitae* and the selection of rules over which he decided to focus his efforts confirms that he can be ranked among the *avant-garde* within contemporary clergy.⁷⁸ This, however, does not necessarily mean that his episcopacy was filled with presumed conflicts between him and Přemyslids, or Bohemian elites, whether secular or ecclesiastical. At least some of his steps might have strengthened not only the power of the bishops of Prague, but also the might of the ruling prince.

St Neilos and his *Life*

Sources and Life: basic evidence

The main source that informs us about St Neilos's life is a legend written in Greek in Grottaferrata soon after he died (1004)⁷⁹ by one of his followers, identified with some degree of probability as St Bartholomew of Grottaferrata.⁸⁰ Otherwise, we also find short notes in other written sources including *First Legend about St Adalbert*.⁸¹ Similarly to St Adalbert, St Neilos produced a number of different texts, mostly hymnography.⁸² More than century ago, Sofronio Gassisi also recognized his hand in two manuscripts, *Cryptensis* B. α. XIX-XX.⁸³

St Neilos was born ca. 910 in Rossano in the Byzantine theme of Calabria and died in 1004. According to the legends, and like many other saints, he was dedicated to reading legends about the holy fathers, whose appearance in the legends gives the reader hints about his future career.⁸⁴ His desire for wisdom and his scholarship remained his attributes during his adult years as well,⁸⁵ and he used these skills not only to save his friend accused of heresy,⁸⁶ but also to pay down the debt he acquired by supporting the poor.⁸⁷ Finally, in one of the manuscripts now preserved at Grottaferrata, *Cryptensis* B. α. IV, we can read the marginal note 'School of St Nilos' that confirms the existence of a learned circle led by him.⁸⁸

We are told that he was married and became a father, but after a few years changed his mind and decided to change his life path.⁸⁹ He first entered the monastery in his 30s.⁹⁰ In the following forty years, he alternated between eremitic and cenobitic lifestyles and was affiliated with different Calabrian or Campanian monasteries. First, he stayed in the valley Lao, then he moved to Merkourion, where he met his later friend St Phantinos,⁹¹ but soon he must have left for St Nazarios for a while.⁹² Soon after coming back to Merkourion, he decided to leave for the cave of St Michael and returned only for a short time to recover.⁹³ In his cave, he met his first disciple, blessed Stephen of Rossano.⁹⁴ In 952/953 he again decided to leave Merkourion due to the Saracen attacks in its vicinity and his new shelter was the monastery of St Adriano near Rossano.⁹⁵ Ca. 981 he transferred to the monastery Valleluce,⁹⁶ which was one of the dependencies of the freshly renewed monastery in Monte cassino.

There he spent ca. fifteen years,⁹⁷ until he decided to leave for Serperi near Gaeta for the next ten years.⁹⁸ He died in the monastery at Grottaferrata on 26 September 1004.⁹⁹

According to the legend, he always insisted on the life of poverty for himself and for his followers: in one of the stories the author speaks about a gift of three cows for him and his monks, to ease their lives. Neilos refused to accept the gift and proclaimed that the life of monks should be hard.¹⁰⁰ He often demonstrated his mercy towards poor people, according to the legend.¹⁰¹ Strong emphasis is also placed on the necessity that the next generation of monks obey his teachings and follow the example of his life.¹⁰² He is also described as a prophet¹⁰³ and such a powerful holy man that even the devil himself could be sent fleeing just by the sound of his name.¹⁰⁴ In accordance with hagiographical *topoi*, there is also an emphasis on his contacts with the important figures of his times. For example, the legend writer makes us aware of his relations with the eminent Jewish scholar and doctor Domnolus,¹⁰⁵ and he also mentions that Neilos was accused of an unspecified crime by the imperial judge Eupraxios who, once he met the holy man, decided to become a monk and asked him to accept him in his flock.¹⁰⁶ Likewise the imperial *paraikomomenos*, or chamberlain, desired to found a monastery and tried to convince Neilos to become a hegoumen,¹⁰⁷ and the prince of Capua, Pandulph, asked him to take over the local bishopric.¹⁰⁸ The hagiographer also mentioned his contact with Emperor Otto III.¹⁰⁹ As we can see, his contacts were not limited to the community of the Greeks, or to the subjects of the Byzantine Empire. The author goes even further when he is telling the story of three monks captured by Saracens and abducted to Palermo. In this story, Neilos, of course, is trying to save the imprisoned monks and sends his envoy to the emir of Palermo; he intends to rely on the emir's Christian secretary, but it is the emir himself who recognizes Neilos's closeness to God and releases the monks through his own good will and without charge.¹¹⁰

St Neilos and his world

The world St Neilos grew up in was very different from St Adalbert's. Against the barbaric and relatively freshly Christianized land hidden behind the belt of Border Mountains, i.e., Bohemia, stood the region of ancient cultural tradition where Christianity had prevailed since late Antiquity. Southern Italy and Sicily, reconquered by Narses and Belisarios, had remained under Byzantine influence since the sixth century. Even though Muslims, after seventy-five years of struggle, gained lasting control over Sicily, with the fall of the last Byzantine fortress Taormina 902,¹¹¹ Byzantine armies led by Nikephoros Phokas the Elder regained control over Calabria and Puglia in the 880s.¹¹² Linguistic evidence and written sources are an indicator of the existence of Greek-speaking

communities in that area that might have survived from the era of Greek colonization.¹¹³ Politically, Southern Italy was not unified under one lord, and Byzantine dependencies united into the Catepanate of Italy were intermingled with the Longobard principalities or independent city states of Naples, Salerno, Amalfi and Benevento.

While the elites fought for dominance and were obsessed over political borders, cultural or religious influences were not limited within Longobard, Byzantine or Muslim political borders. Once Sicily and Southern Italy were reunited under Norman dominance, there were still strong Greek minorities and even Greek bishops.¹¹⁴ Even after the Fall of the Byzantine Catepanate, Latin faithful did not hesitate to support Greek monasteries and the other way around. In these regions, cenobites played a much lesser role than they did in the rest of the Europe, and hermits were much more important: Italo-Greek monasticism remained very simple and monastic settlements were often founded in caves and grottoes;¹¹⁵ they mostly did not follow any fixed and written *regulae* – rules.¹¹⁶ They also differed in other characteristics, i.e., *'flexibility in its approach toward the preparation and formation for the monastic life and for the reception of the monastic scheme'*;¹¹⁷ their hegoumen were designated by their predecessors;¹¹⁸ and they did not keep *stabilitas loci*.¹¹⁹ Despite differences, similar to monasteries in the West, Italo-Greek monasteries played important roles as centers of spiritual and economic life.¹²⁰ Even though many monks lived separately, we should not assume them to be hermits, as they often worked, prayed or ate together under the informal leadership of St Neilos.¹²¹

St Neilos and St Adalbert: East meets West?

Once these two holy men and the milieu they were anchored in had been introduced, it is time to compare their careers and their impact on the communities in Bohemia and in Southern Italy. Only by doing so will we be able to identify not only the differences between them, but also between the regions they represented. The first factor we have to take into consideration is the sources that are available. By the overview of St Adalbert's life, we have seen how tricky even the sources written a few years after the death of the martyr might be. In a way, this example constitutes a warning against excessive faith in assertions that the legends made regarding the close relationship between St Adalbert and the powerful figures of his time. For example, the *Vita* of St Gerard, bishop of Toul, dated to after St Adalbert's death, does mention the protagonist's meeting with the martyr,¹²² while a contemporary account of his journey to Rome by Archbishop Sigeric makes no mention whatsoever of the presence of Adalbert, a future saint and purportedly an important person, in the City of Rome.¹²³ Furthermore, Adalbert is mentioned neither in the writing of Empress Theophano nor in that of

her son, although the two were reputedly very close during their lifetimes. And last but not least Adalbert's meeting with St Neilos is only mentioned by one of his legends,¹²⁴ but not by the author of the *Life of St Neilos*. There are two possible explanations: first, St Neilos was far more important a figure in his time than St Adalbert, which seems to be improbable, as St Neilos died after St Adalbert, and his legend was written in the period when St Adalbert's cult was widespread in France, Germany or Italy. Whereas omitting St Adalbert before his martyrdom does not need any further clarification, as we have seen, it is different after his death. The second hypothesis might be that the barrier between the Greek and Latin world was in general a little bit higher from the Greek side, i.e., Latin scholars were more fascinated by Greek monks, than the other way around.

As both holy men, St Adalbert and St Neilos, met at the end of the tenth century, we have to take into consideration that both men were still – at least theoretically – part of one church: though the relations between Rome and Constantinople were often turbulent, the Great Schism happened three generations later, in 1054. An example of this continued unity is found in John Philagathos (†1013), of Greek origin, who became antipope. He was born in Rossano, served as a chaplain to Empress Theophano and as such he was first appointed abbot of Nonantola and later also bishop of Piacenza.¹²⁵ Blending of Latin and Greek elements is noticeable in manuscripts, and we can find lots of Latin texts in the manuscripts of Calabrian origin.¹²⁶ Not all arguments regarding the knowledge of Latin in the Greek milieu are convincing. St Neilos quotes the *Lives* of St Sylvester or Ambrose of Milan and also betrays his knowledge of the *Dialogues* written by Gregory the Great, which include the *Life* of St Benedict; however, all these texts were also translated into Greek.¹²⁷ Nevertheless, his ability to speak with St Adalbert indicates his knowledge of Latin.¹²⁸ As we mentioned above, St Neilos's contacts were not limited to the Catepanate. We are told that he was invited by the important figure of Italian politics, Pandulph I Ironhead († March, 981), to take over one of the bishoprics in his principate.¹²⁹ Later, he may have visited Monte cassino, where he celebrated the divine office in Greek¹³⁰ and we also have independent evidence for his stay in one of the monasteries subordinated to Monte cassino, in Valleluce.¹³¹ His literary activities, also, betray his respect for the foundations of Latin monasticism: many of them celebrate the memory of St Benedict.¹³² However, his hymns I, III and VII also confirm the barrier between these two worlds, Latin and Greek, as they praise St Benedict as a 'Morning star' or 'Jewel' of the Latin world. Even though he cultivated his contacts with all elements of the Southern Italian world, his writings show that the Latin world was not his world. Here, all three sources, the *Life of St Neilos* and the *First Life of St Adalbert*, together with the hymnography of St Neilos himself, tell the same story.

We are told that St Neilos was aware of the barrier between him and St Adalbert and as a sign of the difference he mentions, especially his beard.¹³³ This story is only preserved in the *First Life of St Adalbert* and we lack its counterpart in *Life of St Neilos*. In sum, the respect that one group showed to the other group was conditioned by an awareness of their otherness. Taking the comment of St Neilos on St Adalbert seriously also means to admit that personal identity has to be understood dialectically, i.e., that it was not just a personal choice, but that it also depended on the acceptance of that personal choice by a given community the person wanted to identify with.

But was the missing beard really the only difference between these two holy men? St Neilos also faced challenges quite different from those his younger contemporary had to handle. From time to time, St Neilos also acted as a missionary when he convinced the Jewish doctor Domnolus to convert;¹³⁴ otherwise he preferred his hermitic or coenobitic life with no contacts with the outside world, as the story about the rejected gift clearly demonstrates.¹³⁵ From St Neilos's *Life* we clearly decipher his focus on his personal perfection, or on the perfection of his followers. It is St Neilos's salvation that interests him the most.

If we just compare the images of both holy men, the result might be similar, especially if we only focus on the *First Life of St Adalbert*, where the anonymous author constructs the figure of a monk,¹³⁶ whose other activities are just one big mistake. St Adalbert's attempt to find the 'real Jerusalem,'¹³⁷ i.e., the ideal monastery where he could spend the rest of his life, sounds familiar to readers of St Neilos's *Life*. However, we also revealed a different aspect of St Adalbert hidden behind the documents he probably used during his episcopacy. Between the lines, we can read that he felt responsible for his flock, and thus he most probably shared the program of the Carolingian *correctio*, which made all lords and bishops fully responsible for the salvation of their subjects and which also made their own salvation dependent on their success in this difficult task. In this, St Adalbert is clearly comparable with other contemporary bishops. This task might also be the reason for St Adalbert to seek for official un-bidding from his episcopal responsibilities. He just did not want to lead the flock that was not following him and risk eternal punishment. Giving up one task he still wanted to do something for others, and he decided on the path of the missionary. To St Adalbert (and many of his western contemporaries) salvation seems to be also politically important, i.e., important for the *polis* or community they represent. For St Neilos, instead, it seems to be mainly the personal responsibility of each man and woman, where he can help to keep them on track to salvation. However, he bears no personal responsibility for the success of his followers, and his individual success does not have any further impact on surrounding lay communities. As a corollary, the rules St Neilos follows are primarily his own.¹³⁸

Notes

- 1 Haverkamp 2007, 85–112. This text was written thanks to the Project *Podpora internacionalizace a excelence publikační činnosti* (Faculty of Arts, Masaryk University Brno and Austrian Academy of Sciences, Vienna).
- 2 Karwasińska 1962 or Hoffmann 2005; Karwasińska 1969. On the issue of the Bishops's *Vitae* of the Ottonian and Salian period generally, see Haarländer 2000. On Adalbert's image in these legends, see Lotter 1997, 77–107. On the so-called Canaparius, see Fried 2001, 235–79. On Bruno, see Weniskus 1956, 69–202. About these legends see also Wood 2001, 207–25.
- 3 Rutkowska-Płachcińska 2002, 19–41.
- 4 On the arguments, see Třeštík 1967, 691–704. For a detailed analysis of this work, see also Kalvodová 1962, esp. 31–98. The two studies provide sufficient reasoning in favor of its late origin adopted by M. Uhlirz or A. Kolberg. Jan Vilikovský definitely distinguished the author of *Quatuor* and Cosmas, but supports the assumption that the work originates from the late eleventh century, see Vilikovský 1929, 317–50. See also corrections in Ryba 1930, 392–401. This source (and the other *passiones*) provides significant and interesting evidence of St Adalbert's cult, but is irrelevant as a source for his life and can be neglected in this regard.
- 5 Friedrich 1904–1907, 43, no. 37. Earlier research was not certain of the authenticity of this document. Recently, its authenticity has been accepted, although no new convincing arguments have been proposed. This document comes from the same Heiligenkreuz manuscript as the bull of Stephen V, alleged Adalbert's sermon, and collection of several episcopal capitularies a penitentiaries from the Carolingian period. On the manuscripts cf. also n. 71.
- 6 See Třeštík and Zachová 2001, 282–4.
- 7 Cf. Ludvíkovský 1978, 8–10; *ibid.*, Chapter 7, 68. Long discussion of its authenticity is now summarized by Kalhous 2015b.
- 8 Suysken 1868, 340–2. Cf. Kolberg 1897, 491–3; Voigt 1898, 345–58; Novotný 1912, 605; Wood 2001, 213.
- 9 PL 137, 895–900. Cf. Wood 2001, 213–15; Sprissler 1966, 102–6. Cf. Gieysztor 1974, 125–8.
- 10 Karwasińska 1969, Chapter 4, 5. It is not possible to rule out that this reflects the common tendency to connect saints with important figures and vice versa. On the circumstances of Adalbert of Magdeburg's mission, which led him through Libice, see Kurze 1890, 170. The reason for his visit to Libice might have been the simple fact that this castle was situated on a trade route that Adalbert had to use on his way to Russia, which shatters the idea that Adalbert was willing to become familiar with the Old Slavonic liturgy in Libice, cf. Holinka 1953, 218–36, at 225–6. Some researchers believe that Bruno confuses the confirmation with the first haircut, perhaps even intentionally, in order to make the text comprehensible for the western readership. On a similar example within St Wenceslaus's hagiography, cf. Třeštík 1997, 198–200.
- 11 Karwasińska 1962, Chapter 1, 3–4; Karwasińska 1969, Chapter 1, 3–4. Similarly Sláma 1995, 182–224. For the arguments in favor of the year 956, cf. Voigt 1898, 16, n. 83; 249–50. On the observation of the age prescribed for the ordination of bishops, but in a different environment, see Kampers 1979, 320–33.
- 12 Karwasińska 1962, Chapter 2, 4–5; Karwasińska 1969, Chapter 2, 4.
- 13 Radla is mentioned by Bruno later in the text. See Karwasińska 1969, Chapter 15, 17.
- 14 The mention of nine years cannot be confirmed nor refuted, see only Karwasińska 1969, Chapter 6, 6.

- 15 Karwasińska 1962, Chapter 6, 9; Karwasińska 1969, Chapter 6, 6.
- 16 Bretholz 1923, 1, Chapter 25, 46.
- 17 The year 982 is traditionally referred to in this regard. However, there is no evidence in the sources, with the exception of Emler 1875a, 381: 'Sanctus Adalbertus in Pragensem episcopum consecratur.' Cosmas mentions that Thietmar died on January 2, 969. Thus, the account of Adalbert's investiture and ordination in June 983 must be taken into consideration. As the election of the new bishop commonly almost immediately followed the death of the previous bishop – according to Canon Law, the maximum interval was three months – it seems more probable that Thietmar died at the beginning of 983.
- 18 See Bretholz 1923, book 1, Chapter 25, 47; Karwasińska 1962, Chapter 7, 11, mentions a place near Prague, without a precise date. Hinkmar Remensis, 'Quae exsequi debeat episcopus, et qua cura tueri res et facultates ecclesiasticas,' PL 125, col. 1091, insists that 'episcopi per electionem cleri et populi secundum statute canonum de propria dioecesi, remota personarum et munera acceptione, ob vitae meritum et sapientiae donum eligantur.'
- 19 Friedrich 1904–1907, 130, no. 124: '... ubi christianitas incepta est. . .'
- 20 For this date, see Karwasińska 1962, Chapter 8, 12–13. Karwasińska 1969, Chapter 9, 18, only mentions that this occurred in Verona. For the meeting of Adalbert with Bishop Gerard of Toul, see Waitz 1841, 495.
- 21 Cf. Třeštlík 1995, 7–59.
- 22 Cf. Ludvíkovský 1978, Chapter 2, 18–20; Kalhous 2012, 143–5.
- 23 Cf. Kalhous 2012, 152.
- 24 Kalhous 2015a, 7–36.
- 25 Schmeidler 1937, 7: 'Boemia habet regem et viros bellicosos, plena est ecclesiis et religione divina. In duos determinatur episcopatus, Pragensem et Olomucensem.'
- 26 Sommer 2001, 76–85, 107–14.
- 27 Macháček and others 2014, 87–153.
- 28 It cannot be ruled out that Bruno and so-called Canaparius only wanted to connect St Adalbert with the empress.
- 29 Waitz 1878, 25: 'Theophanu imperatrix, mater regis, Romam perrexit, ibique natalem Domini celebravit, et omnem regionem regi subdidit.' See also the letter, probably of November 989, in which Gerbert apologizes that he could not go to Rome together with the empress and promises that he will arrive there at Easter, see Weigle 1966, 188–9, no. 160.
- 30 See Sickel 1893a, 876–7, no. 2. The charter of Pope John XV of February 1, 990, in which Theophano intervenes together with Bishop Hugo of Würzburg, provides the latest testimony of her presence in Rome, see Zimmermann 1984, 591–2, no. 305; Zimmermann 1998, 208, no. 683.
- 31 Voigt 1898, 260–1, n. 201. Adalbert was ordained on April 19, 990, cf. Karwasińska 1962, Chapter 16, 24. For the year, see Emler 1875a, A. 990, 381: 'Sanctus Adalbertus episcopus Rome ad sanctum Alexium monachus niger effectus est.' Emler 1875b, 377: 'Professio sancti Adalberti.' Cf. Bretholz 1923, book 1, Chapter 28, 51.
- 32 Karwasińska 1962, Chapter 12, 17; cf. Karwasińska 1969, Chapter 11, 13.
- 33 Karwasińska 1969, Chapter 12, 13–15 and Chapter 14, 20. The hagiographer uses the common *topos* of the close relationships of the saint to an influential person. 'Regular' transport in the Mediterranean sea was only possible from April to October, see Claude 1985, 31–4. Only exceptionally, and for serious reasons, did people travel across the sea in this period, see McCormick 2001, 454–67. Wood 2001, 209 also interprets St Adalbert's trip to Italy as an unsuccessful attempt to make the pilgrimage to Jerusalem.

- 34 Karwasińska 1969, Chapter 13, 15: 'Non Hierosolimi uenisse, sed Hierosolimis bene uixisse laus siue salus est.'
- 35 This was the cause of a long-term dispute between the archbishop of Mainz and the subordinated local bishop concerning the right of the celebration of the mass in Gandersheim, see Görich 1993, 56–94.
- 36 Friedberg 1879, bk. VII. 1. VI, 568 and C. XLVI, 585: 'Pro infestationibus malorum non licet episcopo susceptum gregem relinquere.' *Ibid.*, bk. C. IX. QUESTIO III C. II, 606: 'Sine metropolitani conscientia extra suam diocesim nichil agat episcopus.' There is also the evidence of the older canon law, e.g. Hehl and Fuhrmann 1987, Chapter 26, 33. Escaped priests are threatened with excommunication.
- 37 Allegedly, he was entitled to this, since he had been rejected by his diocese (Karwasińska 1962, Chapter 13, 19). H.G. Voigt claims this on the basis of Innocent III's decree, see Voigt 1898, 58–64. The author generally takes pains to prove the legitimacy of Adalbert's actions. Nevertheless, his version is only supported by Cosmas's account of Adalbert's alleged intention to hand the bishopric over to Strachkvas, the brother of Duke Boleslav, see Bretholz 1923, book 1, Chapter 29, 52–3.
- 38 Karwasińska 1969, Chapter 15, 17–18.
- 39 Karwasińska 1969, Chapter 15, 17–18.
- 40 Karwasińska 1962, Chapter 12–13, 17–19.
- 41 The dating of this event is based on Bruno's assertion that the assault took place on Saturday, on the eve of the Feast of St Wenceslaus, which points to the year 995. See Karwasińska 1969, Chapter 21, 26–8, esp. 27. The mention that Soběslav, the eldest of the brothers, survived thanks to his participation in the emperor's military campaign against the pagans, also supports this dating, for the campaign took place in 995, see Waitz 1878, A. 995, 26: 'Rex Abodritos vastavit, urbes et oppida disiecit; occurritque in auxilium Bolizlau filius Misaco cum magno exercitu, necnon Boemani cum filio alterius Bolizlau venerunt; recepitque se rex in Saxoniam cum exercitu incolumi.' Cf. Třeštík 1967, 695.
- 42 See the contradictory statement in Holtzmann, ed. 1935, book 4, Chapter 28 (19), 165: 'In prima estate Adelbertus Boemiorum episcopus, . . . , omnes excommunicans Romam ad excusandam se apud apostolicum venit.' R. Holtzmann claims that this account is similar to the mention of the *Annales Quedlinburgenses* of Adalbert's martyrdom, see *ibid.* 164, n. 6. But there is no such mention in these annals.
- 43 See the previous note.
- 44 Sickel 1893b, 609–11, no. 201; Zimmermann 1985, 637–9, no. 326; Zimmermann 1998, 231–2, no. 756.
- 45 Chronology of St Adalbert's life is discussed in more detail in Kalhous 2012, 50–71.
- 46 Most explicitly in Karwasińska 1969, Chapter 21, 26–8. One must concur with Bruno in a certain regard, since according to medieval concepts every ruler was responsible for order in his country.
- 47 Cosmas, quite understandably, adopts a different standpoint, cf. Bretholz 1923, book 1, Chapter 29, 53. His claim is indirectly supported by Thietmar who, however, attributes Boleslav's paralysis to the curse placed on him by Adalbert as punishment for his disobedience, cf. Holtzmann 1935, book 7, Chapter 56 (41), 46–8. This solution is not accepted by Michałowski 2014, 173–7.
- 48 Especially in connection with the difference between the *Vita prima* and *Vita altera*, see Haarländer 2000, 390–2, generally 403–14.

- 49 On the role of the right of asylum with regard to the formation of episcopal power in Merovingian Gaul, see Esders 1993, 97–125. On the difficult situation of Church prelates amidst contradictory interests in the (Holy) Roman Empire, see e.g., Thomas 1970, 368–99.
- 50 Adalbert's primary intention, mentioned by hagiographers, to play a seducer points to Krusch 1920, version A, Chapter 9, 39–40. For this view, see also Třeštík 2006, 14–16, which is paradoxical with regard to the author's opinion of the role of secular elites in tenth-century Bohemia. It should be pointed out that the term '*provincial law*' is not appropriate here, since this expression appears in the sources as early as the eleventh century, see Köbler 1969, 1–40. Traditional, non-ecclesiastical law is under discussion here. It is unlikely that this law was enforced by some steady institutions and was fully accepted throughout the whole land.
- 51 Karwasińska 1962, Chapter 19, 30: '... habemus fratres tuos, in quorum uxoribus, prole et prediis hoc malum ulciscamur.'
- 52 Dvořák 1898, 62–3. The author believes that St Adalbert and Otto III could not have met in Aachen at Easter in 995–996. Therefore, he dates the potential coronation to 992. Indeed, the reliability of Cosmas's account is questionable, see Bretholz 1923, book 1, Chapter 28, 50. Still, at least as far as the year 995 is concerned, the meeting was viable, since Adalbert still was active as bishop in Bohemia and Otto really was in Aachen at Easter 995 (see Sickel 1893b, 576, no. 164). Nevertheless, the existence of the tradition according to which Adalbert crowned the Emperor, as Archbishops do, and during the Mass, which corresponds with the later Bohemian coronation ceremony, is more interesting.
- 53 See Karwasińska 1969, Chapter 19, 24–25. But the author of the *First Vita* knows nothing of Adalbert's visit in Paris, see Karwasińska 1962, Chapter 25, 37–8.
- 54 Karwasińska 1969, Chapter 20, 26.
- 55 Karwasińska 1962, Chapter 26, 38–40. Karwasińska 1969, Chapter 23, 28–9: 'Ergo quem suo labori adiutorem Deus preparavit, ducem Polonorum Bolizlauum rerum dubius petit; cuius auxilio nuntios suos miserat ad populum sibi comissum et multocius contradicentem, interrogans si eum recipere uellet.' However, this passage may be a *topos*, whose purpose is to strengthen of St Adalbert's image as an ideal bishop who fulfills his duties despite all tribulations.
- 56 Karwasińska 1969, Chapter 23, 29. This is probably another example of Bruno's (either deliberate or unintentional) efforts to trivialize any link between Adalbert and the Czech lands. Again, the crucial question is when this work was written and who was its author.
- 57 Karwasińska 1962, Chapter 30, 47. Without the date – *Sancti Adalberti Vita altera*; Giese 2004, 492; Holtzmann 1935, book 4, Chapter 28 (19), 165; Emler 1875b, A. 997, 377; Bretholz 1923, book 1, Chapter 31, 55.
- 58 Karwasińska 1962, Chapter 9–12, 14–19; Karwasińska 1969, Chapter 11, 10–13.
- 59 PL 137, 895–900. Cf. Elliot 1993, 105, n. 48: 'emphasizes Alexis as a type of apostolic poverty and speaks of the hundredfold reward that he received, and that those like him will receive, for spurning carnal marriage in favor of virginity.'
- 60 Cf. Michałowski 2014, 204–10.
- 61 Cf. e. g. last analysis of Michałowski 2014, 172–210.
- 62 Friedrich 1904–1907, 43, no. 37: 'Anno dominice incarnationis DCC-CCLXXXII domino Johanne XV papa in sacratissima sede beati Petri

apostoli, imperante domino Ottone III rege augusto, ortante dei nutu domino episcopo II. sancte Pragensis ecclesie Adalberto monacho, dux Bolezlaus presentibus omnibus primatibus suis dedit prefato episcopo secundum statuta canonum *separare ea coniugia, que infra parentelam contra sacram legem coniuncta esse reperirentur, necnon etiam ecclesias per loca opportuna construendi et decimas congregandi licentiam dedit.*'

- 63 Apart from Dušan Třeštík (cf. n. 8) also Mischke 2005, 176, or Michałowski 2014, 187 are firmly convinced about St Adalbert's authorship, *contra* Sosnowski 2013, 16, n. 16, who sees that attribution as only 'probable.'

- 64 Bischoff 1997.

- 65 See Zachová 2001, 288: 'Et quod nunc, fratres? Qua fiducia gregem, cui vos preesse divina clemencia voluit, de iniusta secundarum subintroductione uxorum, ipsi vestras contra regulam possidentes, commonere temptemini? Si vero causa paupertatis, sicuti testificatis, ne victus vestitusve deficeret, ducere vos easdem coegit, dicite, queso, si ea ipsa pauperies filios etiam ex eis generare magna vi necessitatis vos compulsi atque coegit. Sed ne vestra haut satis iusta defensio, qua pene omnes diversissimis sitarum locis ecclesiarum presbiteros eadem impune agere clamat, a nobis sub taciturnitate ommissa quodammodo esse videatur, ei contracto sermone, quantum quimus, respondere – etsi nos admodum parum proficere, ni fallimur, autumamus – non dedignamur. Vir si quidam nobilis, fide probatus, manu largus ad convivium suum more potentium preparatum vos magna cum caritate invitaret atque, ut ita dixerim, predilectione compelleret, e contraque ignotę quidam rustici personę illuc properare proprię ignaviae conscientia teriti, formidantes, ne soli fame cruciarentur, fictis fabulis vos retardarent, vellem scire, cuinam eorum consentireo voluissetis, et an despecto convivio vilissimę personę ioco vos detineri pateremini.' It should be mentioned at this point that the marriages of clerics were normal throughout the whole Christian world.

- 66 Karwasińska 1962, Chapter 12, 17: 'Prima et veluti principalis causa propter plures uxores unius viri; secunda propter detestanda coniugia clericorum. Tertia propter captivos et mancipia christianorum, quos Mercator Iudeus infelici emerat auro; emptosque tot episcopus redimere non potuit. In somnis quoque apparuit ei Dominus, suscitans eum et de lento sopore surgere iussus. Inquit ille: Quis es tu tam imperiosę auctoritatis aut cuius rei gratia quietem frangere iubes? Respondit: Ego sum Ihesus Christus, qui venditus sum; et ecce, iterum vendor Iudeis, et tu adhuc stertis?'; Karwasińska 1969, Chapter 11, 12–13: 'Populus autem durę ceruicis, servus libidinum factus, miscebatur cum cognatis et sine lege cum uxoribus multis. Mancipia christiana perfidis Iudeis uendebant; dies festos confusa religione observant, dies uero ieiuniorum uoluptatibus uacantes omnino non currant. Ipsi clerici palam uxores ducunt, contradicentem episcopum iniquo odio oderunt et sub quorum tutela quique fuerunt, contra ipsum maiores terrę concitauerunt.'

- 67 Karwasińska 1962, Chapter 12, s. 17; Karwasińska 1969, Chapter 11, s. 12–13.

- 68 Cf. n. 67.

- 69 For description of that ms. cf. Gsell 1891, 115–272, here 174–5; Cf. Schmitz 1996, 93–6. Zagiba 1974, 64–72. Cf. Wattenbach 1851, 594–600; Brommer 1984, 12; Hartmann 1977. The two authors date this manuscript to the tenth–eleventh centuries and claim that this item originates from the present-day South-eastern Germany. Wattenbach also points out, with regard to an owner's remark, that the manuscript came to Heiligenkreuz only in the fourteenth century, cf. Třeštík and Zachová 2001, 279–93.

- 70 Cf. Laehr 1928, 159–73.
- 71 Brommer 1984, 73–142.
- 72 Brommer 1995, 34–45.
- 73 Hartmann 1998, 246–311.
- 74 Schmitz 1996. Cf. Airlie 2009, 219–35.
- 75 Cf. Tanner and Alberigo 1990.
- 76 PL 94, cols 567–6.
- 77 In more detail, I am analyzing ms. Heiligenkreuz 217 and comparing it with what we normally understand as St Adalbert's program in a forthcoming paper. That analysis demonstrates that we cannot only find relation between all his requirements and the Carolingian legislation, but we can also track the impact of that legislation in East Central Europe in general (Cosmas and his chronicle; eleventh-century legislation of Hungarian kings).
- 78 Cf. also Michałowski 2014, 204–10. For his later reception the letter is significant Reindel 1988, nr. 57, 168 1058: 'Quid beatum Adelbertum martyrem dicam? Qui nimirum, quoniam Boemiensis aecclisiae postposuit cathedram, monachum induens triumphalem martirii meruit invenire coronam? Utque ex industria de caeteris sileam, quidam sanctus paenitens, cuius me ad praesens vocabulum fugit, iam ante petennium fere episcopatu dimisso tandem angelo visitante praecipitur, ut ad episcopatum redeat. . .'
- 79 Giovanelli 1972; Giovanelli 1966. Cf. Masullo 1989, 463–75; von Falkenhäusen 1989, 271–305; Luongo 1989, 411–40; Hester 1992, 200–21.
- 80 Critically towards that assumption Halkin 1943, 204–6.
- 81 Cf. n. 130.
- 82 Rousseau 1973, 1111–37.
- 83 Gassisi 1904, 308–70.
- 84 Giovanelli 1966, I. 2. 9, 15.
- 85 Cf. Giovanelli 1966, III. 16, 32–3.
- 86 Giovanelli 1966, II. 11–12, 26–8.
- 87 Giovanelli 1966, III. 20, 36–7. For his intellectual preferences cf. Agati 1989, 217–32.
- 88 Sansterre 1991, 339–86, here 370.
- 89 Giovanelli 1966, I. 3, 15–16.
- 90 Giovanelli 1966, I. 4, 16–17.
- 91 Giovanelli 1966, I. 4, 16–17. Cf. Giovanelli 1966, II. 10, 25–6.
- 92 Giovanelli 1966, I. 5, 17–18; Giovanelli 1966, I. 7, 20.
- 93 Giovanelli 1966, II. 13, 29–30; Giovanelli 1966, IV. 22, 38–40.
- 94 Giovanelli 1966, IV. 26, 43–4.
- 95 Giovanelli 1966, V. 36, 53.
- 96 Giovanelli 1966, XI. 73–85, 89–102. Cf. Karwasińska 1962, *Cas. Red.*, Chapter 15, 78: "Etenim, ut iste habitus et intonse barbe pili testantur, non indigena, sed homo Graecus sum. Terra autem quantulumque est, quem ego et mei mecum incolunt, ollorum sanctorum seniorum et fratrum, quos tu non bene fugis, propria est. Quod si, una nobiscum habitaveris, tollent illi, que sunt, et ego cum caris filiis expeller totus."; cf. Hoffman 1980, II. 7, 201 (CDMS): 'hoc ille verbum nimis moleste accipiens mox descendit atque ad virum sanctissimum Nilum, quem tunc apud Vallem luci cum aliquot Grecis fratribus religiosissime conversari perceperat, devote profectus est. A quo dum oportuna humiliter consilia quereret seque ab lilo non posse recipi cognovisset – pro eo enim, quod ita de monasterio nostro recesserat, asserebat predictus pater non audere se illum retinere, ne forte ob hoc et ipse cum suis inde expelleretur –, consilio tandem ipsius Romam reversus in monasterio

- sancti Bonifatii martyris aliquandiu conversatus est nec multopost iterum ad episcopatum suum a pontifice Romano directus.'; *ibid.*, II. 32, 225: 'et ampliavit atque altarium in ea (ecclesia s. Stephani) sancti Adelperti, quem paulo superius factum martyrem diximus, ab occidentali parte adiunxit.'
- 97 Giovanelli 1966, XIII. 86, 103–4. Cf. von Falkenhausen 1989, 299. Cf. the chronology of abbot Manso Hoffmann 1967, 224–354, here 295–300; Hoffman 1980, 12.
 - 98 Giovanelli 1966, XIII. 86, 103–4.
 - 99 Giovanelli 1966, XIV. 99, 116.
 - 100 Giovanelli 1966, V. 37, 54–5.
 - 101 Cf. Giovanelli 1966, IV. 28, 45–6. Cf. Masullo 1989, 466.
 - 102 Giovanelli 1966, IV. 31, 48–9; Giovanelli 1966, V. 38, 55–6.
 - 103 Giovanelli 1966, IV. 24, 41–2; Giovanelli 1966, X. 71, 87–8; Giovanelli 1966, XII. 80–1, 98–9. Cf. Masullo 1989, 467.
 - 104 Giovanelli 1966, VI. 43, 60.
 - 105 Giovanelli 1966, VII. 50–1, 66–8.
 - 106 Giovanelli 1966, VII. 52–VIII. 57, 68–73.
 - 107 Giovanelli 1966, IX. 64–6, 80–3.
 - 108 Giovanelli 1966, XI. 73, 89–90.
 - 109 Giovanelli 1966, XIII. 92–3, 109–10.
 - 110 Giovanelli 1966, X. 70–1, 86–8.
 - 111 Kreutz 1996.
 - 112 Kreutz 1996, 63–6, 68. Loud 2006, 624–45.
 - 113 For a critical survey cf. Hester 1992, 142–6.
 - 114 Hester 1992, 142–6.
 - 115 Hester 1992, 70–102, esp. 89.
 - 116 Hester 1992, 90.
 - 117 Hester 1992, 91.
 - 118 Hester 1992, 90–1.
 - 119 Hester 1992, 92–6.
 - 120 Hester 1992, 96–7.
 - 121 Morini 1977, 1–39, 354–90, here 369–74, 390.
 - 122 Waitz 1841, *Chapter 6*, 495.
 - 123 Ortenberg 1990, 197–245. As we noted a similar strategy was also used in St Neilos's *Life*.
 - 124 Cf. n. 130.
 - 125 Zimmermann 1991, col. 542–3.
 - 126 von Falkenhausen 1989, 302–4. Cf. Giovanelli, trans. 1966, XIII. 89, 106–7.
 - 127 von Falkenhausen 1989, 300–2.
 - 128 Cf. Karwasińska 1962, Chapter 15, 141.
 - 129 Giovanelli 1966, XI. 73, 89. Cf. Sansterre 1991, 344–6.
 - 130 Giovanelli 1966, XI. 74, 90–1. For the older tradition of the celebration of the liturgy in Greek in Monte cassino cf. Sansterre 1991, 353–6, 371–3.
 - 131 Cf. n. 130 and Sansterre 1991, 348–52.
 - 132 Rousseau 1973, 1118, 1119 and 1122.
 - 133 Karwasińska 1962, Chapter 15, 141. Cf. for different markers of identity Pohl 1998, 17–69.
 - 134 Giovanelli 1966, VII. 50–1, 66–8.
 - 135 Giovanelli 1966, V. 37, 54–5.
 - 136 Lotter 1997, 77–107.
 - 137 Cf. n. 36.
 - 138 Cf. Pertz 1841, Chapter 18, 342.

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14 Neilos the Younger and Benedict

The Greek hymns composed by Neilos in Campania

Annick Peters-Custot

As told by his *Βίος καὶ πολιτεία* (*Life and Deeds*), at the end of the tenth century, and precisely between 981 and 984, Neilos the Younger moved from Capua, after a long period of instability, looking for a place to live an ascetic life with some disciples. The generous abbot of Montecassino, Aligerus (948–985), gave him a place, Valleduccio, and a warm welcome in Montecassino, where Neilos is said to have composed, as a mark of gratitude, two Greek hymns in honor of St Benedict.¹ These biographical indications, coming from a biographical source that is known by scholars as reliable and quite true to the historical reality,² are all the more believable since these hymns have been found, published and studied from the eighteenth century onwards.³ My subject, therefore, is at the same time a literary, liturgical and historical one.

The Greek hymns composed by Neilos in honor of St Benedict of Nursia are mentioned in Neilos's hagiography.⁴ They have been preserved in only one manuscript kept at Grottaferrata and written in the twelfth century, the *Crypt. Δ. α. VII*, copied by another Neilos, the eleventh abbot of Grottaferrata. This liturgical manuscript is well known:⁵ it contains the *Menea* for the month of March, among which these hymns have been inserted.⁶ This manuscript was written after 1114.⁷ However, the first two *sticharia* of the *kanon* are also to be found in codex *Vat. gr.* 2008, f. 109, for 21 March. This manuscript was written in 1102, and is signed by Leontios, Hieromonachos of the monastery of St John the Harvester (San Giovanni Terista) near Squillace, Calabria.⁸ The lucky coincidence of having this precise information suggests that there existed close liturgical exchanges between Grottaferrata and the important Italo-Greek monasteries under Norman rule.

As early as 1873, Giuseppe Cozza-Luzi established a first edition that remained strictly confidential,⁹ while he published, soon after, the second book of Gregory the Great's *Dialogues*, both in the original Latin version and in the Greek translation requested by Pope Zacharias in the eighth century.¹⁰ Finally, in 1906, coinciding with the celebrations of the nine hundred years since the foundation of Grottaferrata, the monk Sofronio Gassisi published a second and very complete edition of the Greek hymns

composed at Grottaferrata during the Middle Ages, including those composed by Neilos the Younger for Benedict of Nursia – among other Greek liturgical works written by Neilos and by Paul, second *higumenos* of Grottaferrata.¹¹ This publication, which contains a rich historical introduction and numerous lexical and prosodical commentaries, came at last closer to satisfying our current scholarly standards, and is thus still very helpful today: I will often refer to this work. Olivier Rousseau's excellent paper on Neilos's visit to the abbey of Montecassino, a well-known and often studied event for the contacts between Eastern and Western Churches before the 1054 "schism",¹² also played some part in spreading the reputation of these exceptional liturgical texts, since the author partially published Neilos's *kanon* for Benedict and repeated most of Gassisi's arguments.

Many new studies arose both from Gassisi's edition and from Rousseau's paper.¹³ So Neilos's hymns are nowadays systematically mentioned in studies on Byzantine hymnography, as being a part of the Byzantine liturgical tradition, valued for their language, vocabulary, rhetorical frame, prosodical rules and, not least, their spiritual context.¹⁴ A French translation was later made by Benedictine nuns of Byzantine rite, for the fifteenth centenary of Benedict's supposed birthday.¹⁵ All these works have increased our knowledge and perception of the literary and liturgical production of Greek-speaking Southern Italy, a region that was the Western edge, or the so-called "far-West", of the Byzantine Empire, even after the Norman Conquest.¹⁶

It would be a mistake to forget a very important facet of Neilos's liturgical hymns for St Benedict: they are, indeed, exceptional, not only because they were composed in Campania, in the Latin-speaking part of Southern Italy, close to Montecassino, which was of course the greatest center of Benedict's cult where the saint's body was kept;¹⁷ but also because these texts honor a very special Western saint for the Byzantine liturgical world, a Latin monk. Moreover, the question of the sources from which Neilos the Younger managed to acquire a deep and precise knowledge of Benedict's life has not been entirely clarified as yet. These two points – the originality of the work and its sources – are the main questions that this chapter will explore. It will also provide, in an Appendix, a transcription of these hymns, from Gassisi's edition (1906), and an English translation of my own, inspired by the French publication by the Benedictine nuns just mentioned.¹⁸

I will not address the technical subject of Neilos's respect for Byzantine hymnology in these hymns, since Neilos's hymns strictly obey the norms of this literature.¹⁹ The service composed by Neilos for St Benedict includes two parts: the first one is made up of eight *sticharia* (or *troparia*, that is to say hymns combined with psalm verses); the seventh of these *troparia* is called *kathisma*.²⁰ The second part is a *kanon* for the *Orthros* (matins)²¹ that includes eight Odes, the complete text presenting

twenty-four strophes, of which each first line begins with a letter in the order of the Greek alphabet.²² Each Ode ends, according to the formal rule of Byzantine hymnography, with a *Theotokion* (a strophe dedicated to the Mother of God): the initials of each *Theotokion* compose the author's name (Νείλου Ὁδῆ, "Neilos's Ode"). Faithful, again, to the Byzantine liturgical rules, the sixth Ode is followed by a particular stanza called *kondakion*. The *kanon* presents the highest interest for a historical study since its narrative contents are also the richest.

Neilos's hymns: context

I would like first to highlight two points that seem essential to the understanding of the context and process of writing these hymns: first, the spirit in which Neilos composed them; second, the figure Benedict represented at the end of the tenth century in the monastic world, both in the Latin and in the Byzantine spheres, and overall in Southern Italy.

As already mentioned, around 981, Neilos and some of his disciples benefited from Montecassino's generosity, due to Abbot Aligernus, to the extent that he was given one of the abbey's dependencies, San Michele di Valleluccio. Neilos's accomodation at Valleluccio is well documented thanks to two main sources: Neilos's *Life*²³ and *The Life and Passion of St Adalbert of Prague*²⁴ (the first one being written after the second). Adalbert, a young and very promising aristocrat, was deeply disappointed by the ascetic life led at Montecassino, and found it very far from the degree of perfection he demanded monks to practice; so, seeking advice, he came to Neilos, known by reputation as one of the most demanding monks in the region at this time, in order to benefit from his lessons in ascetic life. Only a short section of the *Life of Adalbert* is devoted to this brief encounter,²⁵ describing how Neilos sent the young Adalbert, along with a sort of letter of recommendation, to the abbot of the monastery of St Alexios, in Rome; nonetheless, this short passage confirms Montecassino's generosity towards Neilos and his companions, as well as the high level of precariousness of the very same monks: in fact, Neilos feared that, by accepting Adalbert's request, the monks of Montecassino and their abbot would have felt hurt and offended by Adalbert's contestation of their ascetic life in which this request was rooted, and would consequently have thrown the Italo-Greek monks out. Even if Neilos's speech was put in his mouth by a Latin hagiographer, its source likely included elements communicated to him by Adalbert himself in Rome.²⁶ Neilos's response to Adalbert thus seems to be reliable.

Therefore Neilos felt indebted to the abbey of Montecassino. It is certainly worth keeping in mind that he paid a visit to the famous abbey and the Benedictine monks who, in return, welcomed him munificently, with honor and curiosity.²⁷ Neilos composed the hymns for St Benedict with a very self-conscious attitude of someone who is in debt. Although these

liturgical texts were perhaps, later on, used by Italo-Greek monks or, at least, in front of a Greek-speaking audience, they had been recited in front of and for the Benedictine community of Montecassino, as narrated in the *Life* of Neilos. We have to keep in mind that Neilos, when writing these hymns, needed to keep in favor with his generous protectors. This context must have influenced his discourse and led him to express exactly what the Latin monks desired to hear.²⁸ These hymns have been sung, later on, within the Italo-Greek community of Grottaferrata.

Let us address St Benedict's *Life* now: what does this great saint represent for the monastic world by the end of the tenth century. In the West, he was not only the founder of Montecassino nor the great monk and hermit who spent an ascetic life doing miracles and telling oracles. This dimension, Benedict earned it thanks to Pope Gregory the Great (590–604), who wrote the first hagiographical text on Benedict's life and who inserted it in the Second book of his *Dialogues* at the end of the sixth century. Later on, Benedict entered the Byzantine world thanks to the Greek translation demanded by pope Zacharias of this work in the eighth century.²⁹ More than this, in the Latin world Benedict had a third dimension that remained unknown in Eastern Christianity: since the Carolingian monastic reform that reached Rome in the beginning of the tenth century when the great abbot Odo of Cluny visited this city,³⁰ shortly before Neilos's stay, Benedict represented the main figure, if not the only one, of a monastic legislator in the West. Neilos knew Benedict's status and called him, as told by his hagiographer, "the great *nomothetes* of the Latin people".³¹ The acute knowledge Neilos had of Benedict's Western dimensions and of his public's expectations is a unique case in Byzantine Christianity.³² The concept of a unique monastic legislator was, in fact, not current in the understanding of the Byzantines. Indeed, the Western conception of Benedict relied upon an essential element that did not exist in the Eastern Christian world: the notion of a monastic rule that is the only common law and reference for the monastic life.

We are fortunate enough to have, with Neilos's hymns on Benedict's life, different sources on the subject, and thus a deep knowledge of the writing context, the spirit in which they have been composed, and the perception of the status of the author, Neilos. This is a wonderful opportunity to explore all the dimensions of liturgical writing in the tenth century, relying on a very rare case, that of a personal composition.

Neilos's sources

One of the most important questions regarding Neilos's hymns in honor of Benedict and, above all, the *kanon*, which is a very detailed narrative hymn on Benedict's life, is: through which texts and documents did Neilos gain access to the facts of Benedict's life? As previous studies from Cozza-Luzi to Rousseau demonstrated, Neilos's hymns related Benedict's

greatest miracles and also kept a place for Benedict's rule. Neither Joseph the Hymnographer's *Menea* nor the Constantinopolitan *Synaxarion* mention Benedict's monastic rule, proof, if needed, that Benedict's rule was of no interest for the Byzantine *milieu* and that they did not entirely understand the very notion of rule. Neilos' life reflects the fact that our Italo-Greek monk had a deep knowledge of Benedict's life and deeds. For example, when questioned by the Montecassino monks on the religious differences between East and West on the Sunday fast, Neilos answers that Benedict fasted on Sunday and even once on Easter Sunday, because he was not aware of the date of Easter.³³ This detail refers directly to one of the first miracles in the second book of Gregory's *Dialogues*, when Benedict, living in extreme solitude and in a state of almost complete wilderness, was discovered by a priest who told him it was Easter Sunday, and that he had to eat.³⁴

Neilos's debt to the *Dialogues* is clear, above all, in the *Kanon*, for the biographical events as well as for the order according to which the different facts are presented: this has already been remarked by Rousseau.³⁵ Two small details and differences have to be added to this general picture: first, Neilos stopped his narrative of Benedict's wonders at *Dialogues* Chapter 15, after which the Π stanza summarizes the following chapters. The next stanza, P, explains that Gregory the Great related thirty-six miracles; the Σ stanza broaches the monastic rule, then the hymn resumes the narration of the miracles, relating the wonders found in *Dialogues* Chapters 34–37. Thus, half of the *Dialogues*'s miracles (Chapters 16–33) have been omitted, certainly in order to keep the liturgical poem inside the literary frame, and to limit the number of stanzas to twenty-four (coinciding with the number of letters in the Greek alphabet). But even within the first half of the list Benedict's miracles that Neilos decided to include, there are some omissions or modifications. For example, Neilos does not refer to the contents of Chapter 2, devoted to the temptations of the flesh sustained by the saint, and the victorious resistance Benedict succeeded in putting up, preferring to throw himself in a thorn bush. The miracle in Chapter 13 continuing the theme of lust is also avoided: this miracle is only a variation on the previous one and may have been omitted for brevity's sake. Besides, Neilos made some slight modifications within the order of the miracles as presented in the *Dialogues*: in the *Kanon*, the stories of the rescued boy, of the young monk healed from his *akedia*, and of the water font (I and K stanza) correspond to the miracles in Chapters 7, 5 and 4 respectively. The order has thus been modified – probably for narrative convenience, in order to link the rescue-miracle to the previous stanza, where *Maurus* – this miracle's main protagonist – has just been named. In the Σ stanza, Benedict's monastic rule (Chapter 36 in the *Dialogues*) is cited in Neilos's *Kanon* before the miracles in Chapter 34 and 35; and the order of appearance of both miracles, in the X stanza, had been reversed.³⁶

These slight differences aside, Neilos's *Kanon* follows very closely the contents and order of events in the second book of Gregory the Great's *Dialogues*. A few details in the content aim at conclusively establishing Neilos's fidelity to the *Dialogues*³⁷ which constituted the first – and, for a long time, the only – hagiography of the holy monk.

However, it should be noted that Gregory's *Dialogues*, written in Latin at the end of the sixth century, took on the role, in the tenth century, of what we could call an "omnipresent hypo-text" which gave birth to numerous rewritings during these four centuries, in Greek as well as in Latin. So, if the main debate concerning Neilos's source was whether to identify it in the primary Latin version or with the Greek translation, many other rewritings and documents deriving from the *Dialogues* could have also been used by Neilos, although they have not been considered by scholars until now. Since it is not obvious that they did not play any part, they need to be considered here as hypothetical sources for Neilos's hymns.

In brief, four main sources or kinds of documents can be listed, to which Neilos may have had access in Southern Italy:

- 1 The second book of Gregory the Great's *Dialogues* in its original, sixth-century Latin version;³⁸
- 2 The second book of Gregory the Great's *Dialogues* in a Greek translation that had been requested, if not done, by Pope Zacharias in Rome in the eighth century;³⁹
- 3 The hymns composed in Greek by Joseph the Hymnographer in the ninth century, and included in the *Menea* for St Benedict's feast on March 14;⁴⁰
- 4 Cassinian liturgical poetry and literature written in Latin in honor of Benedict before Neilos arrived at Montecassino in the 980s.

This list presents two kinds of sources, each one available in both Latin and Greek versions: the hagiographical texts on the one hand, and the literary and poetic texts on the other. Only the documents that might have been available to Neilos have been taken into consideration: whether he read them in Montecassino's library, to which Neilos certainly had access, or whether he himself possessed the manuscripts. The most ancient manuscript of the Greek version of the *Dialogues*, now *Vat. gr.* 1666, was written in Rome and dated ca. 800, and remained in the Grottaferrata library.⁴¹ It is highly probable that Neilos would have read it,⁴² since we know from his hagiography that he spent some time in Rome to acquire manuscripts before going to Montecassino.⁴³ And even if *Vat. gr.* 1666 was not owned by Neilos, the large circulation of Zacharias's Greek translation in the Byzantine world can make us presume that Neilos had, in any case, direct access to this Greek version.⁴⁴

Joseph the Hymnographer's hymns in honor of Benedict had certainly no influence on Neilos's poetry. Most of Joseph's *Menea* for Benedict are only lightly marked by the saint's characteristic features, unlike Neilos's text that is, on the contrary, very detailed and closely follows the *Dialogues*'s list of Benedict's miracles. Besides, the rare events or miracles peculiar to Benedict's life that have been quoted by the *Menea* are not those retained by Neilos.⁴⁵ There are, however, two exceptions. The first is the miracle of the water source that the saint had caused to spurt out (from *Dialogues* Chapter 5), which is present both in Neilos's hymns (K stanza) and in Joseph's fifth Ode. However, these passages deal with the subject in entirely contrasting ways: while Neilos puts forward Moses with his stick as an exemplary figure, and adds that the brothers were delighted by the result, Joseph the Hymnographer only mentions the miracle performed in the name of Christ.⁴⁶ Second, in the seventh Ode, Joseph recalls the miracle of the thwarted attempt at poisoning Benedict.⁴⁷ But there, as in all the Odes composed by Joseph, the facts are not presented in a manner as subtle and precise as by Neilos. It is all but doubtful that Joseph inspired Neilos, except perhaps in the image shared by both of them, of the radiant Benedict who became a light for all.⁴⁸

A second hypothesis is that Neilos could have been inspired by the Latin Cassinese poetry composed in honor of St Benedict, and that he could have read it during his sojourn at Montecassino monastery.⁴⁹ There again, probably have to exclude this assumption, but not because Neilos could not have understood these Latin texts. The author of Neilos's *Life* presents his hero, when visiting his Benedictine brothers, as a bilingual monk, certainly thanks to the frequent and long periods during which he had stayed in Latin-speaking areas, and during which he had to speak in Latin, for example so as to converse with Adalbert, the Lombard Prince, the Western Emperor, and whomever else he encountered. However, the ways the elements of Benedict's life are presented in the Cassinese poetry and in Neilos's hymns are quite different and cannot be compared. Among this Cassinese poetry written before the end of the tenth century,⁵⁰ the most important was composed by Paul the Deacon († ca. 800), who wrote two poems for Benedict.⁵¹ No element of similarity can be identified between Neilos's hymns and in this Latin poetry, that was strictly framed by very restricting literary and rhetorical rules, such as those of the *abbreviatio*, a very constrained form that imposed an extremely brief discourse, concentrated only on the miracles's effects, and not on the events themselves.⁵² There are no names, no places cited, no details. The discourse is metaphorical: even the monastic rule written by Benedict is alluded to through an image of the monastic life as a fight:

*Dux bone, bella monens exemplis pectora firmas;
Primus in arma ruis, dux bone, bella monens.*⁵³

Thus, the monastic ideal is not the same as what Neilos's hymns convey. We must conclude that no relationship can be found between this old Cassinian poetry and Neilos's hymns.

Having established that the main, if not the only, source for Neilos must be directly the second Book of Gregory the Great's *Dialogues*, we can attempt to determine whether this text was read by him in its original Latin version, or in the Greek translation made under Pope Zacharias's supervision. In fact, there is no Greek tradition of Benedict's *Life* that is independent from Gregory's initial version.⁵⁴ Yet, there exists a Greek version that seems at least partially independent from Zacharias's Greek translation of the *Dialogues*: this version, present among other hagiographical texts in the tenth-century manuscript shelfmarked *Patmiacus gr.* 266 represents certainly a very complex case,⁵⁵ and the hypothesis according to which this version is a translation of the *Dialogues* made prior to Zacharias's version has not yet been ascertained. In any case, it is obvious that Neilos did not use it, or, at least, that he did not use only it: a great number of chapters and miracles mentioned by Neilos (Chapters 9 and 10, 12 to 15, and above all Chapter 36, on the monastic rule, on which Neilos insists particularly) are not included in the *Patmiacus* version.⁵⁶

In his study on Neilos's *Kanon*, Rousseau asserts that some clues show that Neilos used the *Dialogues*' Latin version and not the Greek one.⁵⁷ Unfortunately, this scholar did not present the arguments upon which he relied to affirm this. In fact, Rousseau only repeated Gassisi's opinion, which the latter did not argument either, only indicating that his hypothesis was opposite to Cozza-Luzi's. Cozza-Luzi, indeed, thought that Neilos had derived his information from the Greek translation of the *Dialogues*, without on his part unveiling proof for the first or the second thesis.⁵⁸

When we compare the vocabulary used in Zacharias's translation of the *Dialogues*, and that used by Neilos for his hymns, Neilos's lexical independence is obvious:⁵⁹ this vast gap in the general lexical choices of Neilos's hymns can reflect the fact that Neilos made his own translation from the Latin *Dialogues* to write his hymns, without being influenced or inspired by Zacharias's translation. It can be taken as a proof that Neilos knew Benedict's life mostly, if not only, through the original Latin redaction written by Pope Gregory the Great. Another element in favor of this hypothesis is Neilos's curious word, coming from the Latin *regula*, but transliterated into Greek letters: *ρέγουλα*.⁶⁰ This word *regula* seems strongly and exclusively attached to the story of Western Latin-speaking Christianity and to the Latin texts concerning Benedict (from the Latin *Dialogues* to Benedict's own rule, which contains the word *regula*). In fact, as I demonstrated elsewhere,⁶¹ the Greek words that could be associated with the monastic rule, in the Greek, are *nomos* and *kanon*: both, however, convey a notion of monastic rule that is strictly different from

the Western notion of *regula*. Thus, it is impossible for the Greek translators to reflect the reality of the Western notion conveyed by the Latin word *regula*, by using the current Greek words that are *nomos* or *kanon*. For example, the Greek translator of Gregory the Great's hagiography, unlike Neilos, preferred the current Greek vocabulary to define a reality of which the Eastern world was widely unaware.⁶² Neilos did the same in his hymns except once, when he chose the transliteration *ρέγουλα*. Let us note that, according to Du Cange, this is the only occurrence of this neologism: Neilos created an *hapax*, and he himself used it only once.

Nevertheless, new arguments may definitively uphold the thesis that Neilos knew Benedict's life through the Greek version of the *Dialogues*. These arguments rely first on a comparison between the Latin version of the *Dialogues* and its Greek translation; then on the analysis of the relationship between Neilos's hymns and the Latin and Greek versions of the *Dialogues*. The Greek version of the *Dialogues* is, indeed, very close to the original Latin, at least in the general construction: the order of the miracles is strictly respected;⁶³ on the other hand, the Greek version took numerous liberties with the original, as already noticed by Adalbert de Vogüé.⁶⁴ Unfortunately, there is no methodical and exhaustive comparison between these two versions, but this survey gives some conclusive results.⁶⁵

First, sometimes Neilos's hymns and the Greek version of the *Dialogues* respect similar silences, relative to the Latin original. So, at the end of the long Chapter 8, which relates numerous wonders, Peter, Gregory the Great's disciple, exclaims: "How beautiful! Your words leave me lost in thought, as – I can see it – this water extracted from the rock echoes Moses, the iron going up from the deep water, Eliseus, the running upon the water, Peter, the obedient crow, Elias, the mourning for an enemy's death, David."⁶⁶ Now, the Greek translation "forgets" the comparison with David,⁶⁷ which Neilos also omits from his *Kanon*.⁶⁸

Further, the Greek version of the *Dialogues* and Neilos's hymns both sometimes added similar elements not found in the original Latin: for example, the word "*akedia*". In Chapter 4, one of Benedict's monks is depicted as being unable to stay peaceful during prayer, and Benedict scolds him: the monk first obeys, but, three days later, he "started to run away again and resumed his walking during the prayer".⁶⁹ At this point, the Greek version offers an important expansion to the text, beginning with: "Ὁ δὲ τοῦτου ἀββᾶς θεασάμενος αὐτὸν ὑπὸ τοῦ τῆς ἀκηδίας δαίμονος νικηθέντα" ("His abbot, seeing that [his monk] was won over by the devil of *akedia*").⁷⁰ This very same word, *akedia*, is also found in Neilos's *Kanon*, at the K stanza: Καταβάλων τὸν πονηρὸν // μωσαϊκῇ // βακτηρίᾳ, τὸν παῖδα // ἀκηδίας τοῦτου ἤλευθέρωσας ("Hitting as if with Moses' stick the unhappy adolescent you relieved him from his *akedia*"). Even if the monastic *akedia* corresponds exactly to the symptoms described in the Latin version of the *Dialogues* (being unfit for contemplation, wandering

of the spirit, spiritual instability), the Latin word *akedia* is not used here, and Neilos's *Kanon* repeats the gloss that only matches the Greek version. This passage could provide another argument in favor of the Greek version as Neilos's source.

However, the most convincing argument is certainly, as often in these situations, offered by an error in the translation from the Latin text to the Greek. At the end of the third chapter, Gregory the Great explains that Benedict's fame rose and reached Rome: the Roman nobility sent him its sons, and Gregory named the main representatives of these new recruits for Benedict's monasteries: "So *Euthicius* and the *patricius Tertullius* gave him their most promising sons: the first one, *Maurus*, the second one, *Placidus*."⁷¹ Then Neilos relates another version in stanza Θ: "Θεία σοι, μάκαρ, καθυπέταξε Πλακιδᾶν τὸν κλεινὸν παῖδα τὸν τοῦ Τερτύλλου, Ἐβίτζιον τὸν ἑνδοξόν, καὶ τὸν ἱερόν, εὐδοκία, τὸν Ῥώμης Μαῦρον"; which translates as: "Your divine Benevolence, O blessed, placed entirely under your direction *Placidus*, illustrious son of *Tertullius*, the famous *Evitius*, and the Roman priest *Maurus*!" According to Neilos's version, Euthicius is not the father of one of the Roman boys who were sent, but one of Benedict's new disciples. Now, this mistake is found already in Zacharias's Greek translation of the *Dialogues*, where things are presented in the same mistaken manner: "Τότε τοίνυν τῆς καλῆς ἐλπίδος τὰ τέκνα Ἐβίτζιος καὶ Μαῦρος πρὸς αὐτὸν ἀπετάξαντο, καὶ Τέρτουλλος δὲ ὁ πατρικίος Πλάκιδον παρέδωκεν,"⁷² which can be translated as follows: "Then very promising children, *Evitius* and *Maurus*, are sent to him, and the *patricius Tertullius* offered *Placidus*."

As the editor of the Greek version of the *Dialogues* does not mention in his critical notes any variation that occurred in the manuscript tradition, we can deduce that all the manuscripts present this very same error, which undoubtedly existed from the very beginning.⁷³ It is not easy to see, from the critical apparatus of de Vogüé's edition of the Latin original text, whether one of the collated manuscripts of the Latin *Dialogues* might have presented the very same error as the Greek translation, in particular in one of the oldest Roman manuscripts upon which Pope Zacharias – or the author of the Greek translation ordered by this pope – might have worked. In fact, de Vogüé explained that the *Dialogues*'s success gave birth to a huge quantity of manuscripts during the Middle Ages, and because of this broad transmission it was not possible to draw a stemma: thus, he had to compose his edition according to "families" of manuscripts.⁷⁴ But, more interesting for us, de Vogüé listed all the inaccurate versions contained in the oldest Italian manuscripts:⁷⁵ none of them is related to our passage about the sons of the Roman nobility sent to Benedict. Moreover, in the critical notes relating to this very same passage, no differing version is mentioned either.⁷⁶ We can certainly conclude that the error, in the Greek version, did not result from an ancient Latin manuscript; that this error was specific to this Greek translation in its first and

definitive form, since all the known manuscripts of this Greek translation contained this error; and that if Neilos repeated this error, it is because he read it in the Greek version of the *Dialogues* and through the manuscript which he had in his hands, that is, most probably, *Vat. gr.* 1666.

It seems well and truly demonstrated now that the main, if not the only source of Neilos's hymns in honor of St Benedict was indeed the Greek version of Gregory the Great's *Dialogues*, in the translation ordered by Pope Zacharias in Rome in the middle of the eighth century. This textual genealogy, however, does not preclude Neilos's originality in composing the verses based on such hagiographical material.

Neilos's hymns: an original work?

The originality of Neilos's hymns in honor of Benedict of Nursia consists above all in their choice of subject. A similar motivation may have led Neilos's hagiographer to expose in a dramatic way, in Chapter 13 of Neilos's *Life*, the context of composition of this unique Byzantine liturgical piece. If we except Joseph the Hymnographer, Neilos is the only author of Greek hymns on Benedict. According to the partial but illuminating catalogue made by Enrica Follieri,⁷⁷ the list of Western saints in Byzantine hymnography includes around only twenty figures that can be classified in the following categories: 1) Peter and Paul, Princes of the Apostles, venerated with an equal intensity in the East and in the West, and who constitute then a separate case. 2) The martyrs of Rome, buried along the consular roads: Lawrence, Sebastian, Agnes, etc. 3) The protagonists of Roman legends such as Clementius, Cecilia, Anastasia, etc. 4) Popes: Sylvester, Leo the Great, Martin the Confessor.⁷⁸ 5) Important Western prelates, mostly from Italy, such as Ambrose of Milan or Januarius of Naples. 6) Some groups of martyrs, from either Africa or Milan. Only two saints departed from such a pattern: Benedict of Nursia and Martin of Tours, both present in Greek hymnography through the Italo-Greek *milieu*.⁷⁹

In the many stanzas of his liturgical composition, Neilos gave a renewed version of Benedict's life as presented in the *Dialogues*. As we said before, Neilos gathered all the biographical elements through a vocabulary that is specific and totally independent from his source. Speaking in terms of writing and of *Schriftlichkeit*, Neilos acts like a writer and shows he is also an author and not only a compiler. But Neilos, at the same time, even goes as far as to remodel some miracles through the presentation he gives of them. In Chapter 9 of the second book of the *Dialogues*, for example, the monks could not manage to lift a rock since the devil was seated on it. Benedict, called to help them, succeeded in making the rock light thanks to his prayers. In Neilos's hymns, this miracle, developed in the N stanza, presents several variations with respect to the *Dialogues*. First, Benedict managed to lift up the stone not thanks to his prayers, but thanks to

his *logos*, his performative word, which reminds us of God in the Creation, or of Saint John's Prologue to his Gospel. Then, Neilos inserted a comparison between Benedict and Saint Gregory of Neocaesarea, also called Gregory the Wonderworker, a third-century bishop who, among his main miracles, put into practice Christ's words and moved a mountain in order to build a church.⁸⁰ And last, Neilos inserted at the end this cry let out by the devil: "What have I to do with thee? Stop hounding me in the future!" These words, that are not in the *Dialogues*, partially echo Christ's words to his mother during the marriage at Cana⁸¹ and partially Christ's words to Saul the Persecutor on the road to Damascus.⁸² It seems obvious that Neilos's presentation of this miracle, far from being lighter and shorter than Gregory's narration, is quite different and above all richer, in particular with reminiscences and references aiming at giving a Christ-like description of Benedict, particularly suited to a Greek audience, expecting a *Christomimesis* model for the monk.

Among all modifications that Neilos introduced in his version of Benedict's life, several appear true to Neilos's personality and experiences, as known to us through his own biography. He added, for example, the presence of Gregory of Nazianzus in the *Kanon*'s final *triadikon*:

Τριαδικόν

Δόξα πατρὶ προανάρχῳ
καὶ Υἱῷ συνανάρχῳ,
καὶ δόξα Πνεύματι τῷ θεῷ καὶ Θεῷ·
τριλαμπεῖ γὰρ μονάς,
καὶ ἐν μονάδι τριάς,
ὡς Γρηγόριος ἔφη
ὁ μέγας καὶ πολὺς·
οὐ ταῖς θεαῖς πρεσβεαῖς
σῶσον ἡμᾶς, ὁ Θεός.

Triadikon

Glory to the Father who is from all eternity
and to the Son coeternal with Him
And glory to the divine Spirit and to God
for the unity shines in a triple brightness
and in the unity the Trinity,
as Gregory said
the Great and most worthy.
By his divine prayers,
Save us, O God!

This quotation is indeed very apposite, inserted in the final doxology (implying the Trinity's glorification), to remind the orthodox doctrine about the Holy Trinity, since Gregory of Nazianzus is one of the first formulators of this doctrine. This cannot be a reference to Gregory the Great, called "the *Dialogos*" in the Eastern tradition, as he is known in the Byzantine world through the translation of the *Dialogues* in Greek. When referring to Gregory the Great, Neilos follows this Eastern tradition (see Ode 7). There is thus no doubt in identifying this Gregory with Gregory Nazianzen, whose participation to the construction of the Trinity's dogma is well known.⁸³ It may also be significant that Neilos's biographer says that the saint was particularly attached to this Church Father.⁸⁴

Even more interesting are the two places of his *Kanon* where Neilos slightly modified an event in Benedict's life in order to impress on it a direction more consonant with his own personal experience. In one

passage, as we have remarked above, he deleted all references to Benedict's fight against the temptations of the flesh, while this struggle was the subject of an important discourse in Gregory's *Dialogues*,⁸⁵ and was repeated and developed in Joseph the Hymnographer's first Ode.⁸⁶ Neilos also omitted a story, present in *Dialogues* II, Chapter 8, in which seven naked young women came and tempted the monks. It is not unlikely that Neilos, who had been the biological father to a child before becoming a monk,⁸⁷ would have preferred to underplay the glorification of a chastity that he did not himself experience in his youth. Neilos kept silent as well on an essential event of Benedict's youth, told as early as the beginning of the first chapter, in both the Greek and Latin versions of the *Dialogues*. Benedict, sent by his parents to study at Rome, changed his mind on the way, in order to avoid the temptation of all the perversions and vices of the City, and because he preferred God's conversation to worldly science and its vanity.⁸⁸ Neilos keeps silent about this episode, perhaps because it contrasted with his own erudite formation, that he received even before becoming a monk,⁸⁹ and that he carefully maintained during all his life as an extraordinary learned monk.⁹⁰ More challenging to interpret, on the other hand, is the variation Neilos presents of Benedict's three-year-long eremitic experience. While, in the *Dialogues*, Benedict, found by the monk *Romanus*, received from the latter his monastic habit,⁹¹ Neilos did not refer to his taking the "angelic habit", but emphasized that Benedict spent these thirty-six months submitted to *Romanus* – just as the young Byzantine monk was allowed, with his *bigumenos*'s permission, and under his control, to live a temporary eremitic experience, often with one or two other monks.

From these observations, Neilos's compositional intent appears aimed at giving a version of Benedict's life that could be read coherently with his own life: this attitude reveals a writing process in which the author inserts something personal, even in a liturgical framework. This peculiarity appears also in the cultural references that Neilos inserts in his work, and which demonstrate personal choices but also resonate from his deeply Greek and Italian culture. Comparing Benedict with Gregory of Neocesarea, for example, might not have occurred from a purely Western viewpoint. The comparison between Benedict and Basil, besides, repeats a liturgical *kanon* in honor of Saint Theodore Stoudite:⁹² there again, in the tenth century, only a Byzantine monk could have used such a reference. This deeply Byzantine culture is matched, in Neilos's writing, with a true and real knowledge of the Latin Church Fathers⁹³ and, what is much more specific and rare, a real knowledge of typically Western monastic realities that remained unknown to Eastern Christianity. Neilos's *Life* explains why Neilos called Benedict the "*nomothetes* of the Latin people, and their master (*didaskalos*)" and that he praised the obedience of the monks of Montecassino and regularity of life: these details reflect Neilos's knowledge of the Western monastic world as framed by the Carolingian

reform (from 817 onwards) which aimed at making St Benedict's rule the only reference in the Western Empire. This monastic reform reached Rome in the middle of the tenth century, at the time when the great abbot Odilo of Cluny came to the City,⁹⁴ that is to say almost at the same time as Neilos's arrival.

Neilos was also fully informed about the normative standardization in the Western abbeys. This is how his transposition in Greek letters of the Latin *Regula* has to be understood. In other Greek texts, and even in most of Neilos's hymns, the monastic rule invented by Benedict is called, in accordance with Byzantine terminology, *nomos*. When Neilos invented the word *ρέγουλα*, he gave an innovative name, a title to Benedict's *opus*, in order to have the monks understand that this rule is a unique text that deserved alone this new word, title and name:⁹⁵ "You left us, O Father, a divine norm, perfect guide for the monks, and you named it: *Regula*." Neilos knew perfectly well that Benedict (or, more exactly, his post-Carolingian inheritance) had invented a new concept, that of the "rule," *regula*. Consequently, for him, this new notion could not be reflected in the Greek current words such as *kanon* or *nomos*. So he presented this innovative Western notion as he would give the title of a book, or the name of a new thing: "and you named it: *Regula*."⁹⁶

Neilos was conscious that Benedict's monastic status remained, at this time, limited to the Western area. Some scholars have asserted that Neilos would have ascribed to Benedict a status and function of *nomothetes* for both the Eastern and the Western world,⁹⁷ on the basis of this passage: Τῷ νομοθέτῃ τῶν ἀσκητῶν Ναζηραίων τε καὶ τῶν Ῥωμαίων ὁ χορὸς Μοντεκασίνου βοήσατε νῦν; transl.: "To the legislator of the ascetics of Nazaria and Rome, O choir of Montecassino, sound a hymn now." For Olivier Rousseau, this interpretation is much exaggerated,⁹⁸ and I share his opinion. As I have explained above, Neilos told his Benedictine brothers exactly what they desired to hear, that is to say about the universal status of their saint patron's rule (Θεῖον νόμον ἡμῖν καταλέλοιπας ὁδηγίαν πᾶσαν μοναχῶν). But Neilos did not think that this vision, unknown to his own Byzantine culture, could hold for Eastern Christianity. Neilos's hymns continuously assert (and with sincere admiration) that Benedict was the glory of Rome, of Campania, of the Latin people:⁹⁹ without saying explicitly, but clearly implying, that Benedict was not, in fact, the glory of the East.¹⁰⁰

Such deep-rootedness in a regional reality pertains to Neilos's specific culture, that of a Byzantine monk wandering through Italy. I would even suggest that Italy, as glorified in Neilos's hymns, is less Benedict's Italy than Neilos's own. As hymnographer, Neilos mentions Nursia, Benedict's birthplace, and Montecassino. This is entirely appropriate. He mentions Rome too, even if, finally, Benedict never reached the City (perhaps because of Benedict's attraction towards the Roman nobility; perhaps because a pope wrote his life and a pope had it translated). Nevertheless,

these three places are mentioned in the *Dialogues*. On the other hand, I have no valid explanation for the mention of Naples, a city that does not appear in the *Dialogues*: as if Montecassino, founded in Campania,¹⁰¹ were in Neilos's mind in turn linked to Naples.¹⁰² Neilos's mention of Naples, less appropriate for Benedict's life than for Neilos's own, reflects its importance in tenth-century Southern Italy, where Naples plays a great role in religious life and culture. Additionally, Neilos once mentioned Montecassino not according to the usual periphrastic designation (τὸ τοῦ Κασίνου ὄρος, or similar variations), but writing the actual toponym, Μοντεκασίνου;¹⁰³ this is not Greek, nor even Latin (this spelling does not appear in the *Dialogues*); rather, we find here a rare trace of vernacular language¹⁰⁴ that Neilos had adapted into Greek, demonstrating his knowledge of the local realities, including the linguistic one. Here again, we can see in some detail how often Neilos inserted personal elements: the precise knowledge of the geography and, above all, his attachment to the places where Benedict had lived. Such topographical sharpness did not exist in Joseph the Hymnographer, and was quite subtle in the *Dialogues*. We have to keep in mind that Neilos, like many other Italo-Greek saints and monks in the Byzantine period, had a personal and deep link to his homeland, as shown when he introduced himself by naming his birthplace.¹⁰⁵ He certainly thought Benedict's birthplace was also important, as well as the place where his holy body was buried and kept, Montecassino abbey. A saint's earthly homeland, as Enrica Follieri mentioned many times, is his deathplace and, therefore, the very foundation of the cult is the place where the saint was buried.¹⁰⁶ In Benedict's case, both of them, the deathplace and the location of the tomb, merged to give a new identity for Campania: that of being Benedict's homeland.

Conclusion

Saint Neilos read Benedict's life thanks to the Greek translation of Gregory the Great's *Dialogues* made by Pope Zacharias more than a century before, but not in the original Latin, as it has been sometimes believed. Neilos's liturgical opus in honor of Benedict remains, however, a wholly original literary creation in the Byzantine hymnographical context as well as in comparison with the original source. The subject chosen by Neilos, that of praising a Western monk, but also the context in which Neilos composed these texts, may explain this originality in the Byzantine liturgical landscape: Neilos expressed exactly what his monastic public, on which he relied economically, wanted to hear. But Neilos's hymns are above all original because they reflect a very personal writing and re-writing of Benedict's life according to the author's own life and experience. In our current historiographical context, when the analysis based upon the medieval liturgical and hagiographical texts is combining the resources of literacy, literature and history, these Greek hymns written

by the greatest Italo-Greek monk allow us to approach some of the latest questions asked by recent historiography: the vague borderline between writing genres in the Middle Ages; the way the methods of literary analysis may be inserted in the historical study of medieval documentation and may modify the historical perception of these very same texts, then become “discourses”; or how much richer a scientific analysis of medieval texts may be, when the strategies of the liturgical discourse are taken into account, as well as the geographical and chronological context, the public’s reception and even the author’s personality.

Among the three Gregorys mentioned in Neilos’s hymns, the *Theologos*, the *Thaumaturgos*, and the *Dialogos*, the latter will endure a local posterity at Grottaferrata abbey: this monastery was not only the place where the oldest known manuscript of Gregory’s *Dialogues* in Greek translation has been preserved, perhaps that purchased by Neilos himself; but it was also the place where the combined hagiographical stereotypes, from the Latin as well as from the Greek tradition, react and vivify the hagiographical Greek-speaking production. Gregory the Great had his part to play, as can be seen through the insertion, in Saint Bartholomew the Younger’s *Life*, of a vision of this pope.¹⁰⁷ From Neilos to Bartholomew, Grottaferrata abbey’s role was central to the spreading of Benedict’s *Life* in the Greek-speaking world, first as an ascetic thaumaturge, then as a “*nomothetes*,” and finally as a hagiographical model.

Notes

- 1 Giovanelli 1972, Chapter 72 ff.
- 2 Follieri 2006, 113–14; von Falkenhausen 1983 and von Falkenhausen 2009.
- 3 Sciommarì 1728.
- 4 Giovanelli 1972, Chapter 13.
- 5 Described by Rocchi 1883, 301–3. This manuscript has been largely used for the publication of the *Analecta Hymnica Graeca e codibus eruta Italiae Inferioris*, directed by G. Schirò. However, the seventh volume, that of the *Canones Martii*, Rome, 1971 (Istituto di Studi bizantini e neoellenici), does not include Neilos’s hymns for St Benedict.
- 6 In the Latin tradition, Benedict is celebrated on the 21st of March, while in the Byzantine world he is celebrated on March 14 (see Joseph the Hymnographer’s *Menea* for the 14th of March: Joseph the Hymnographer 1898, 84–9). In the abbey of Grottaferrata, Benedict is celebrated according to the Latin calendar, on March 21: see Gassisi 1906, 13 n. 2, and Rousseau 1973, 1117.
- 7 Gassisi 1906, 11.
- 8 Gassisi 1906, 68. The monastery of St John the Harvester (Hagios-Iohannes-Theristes) situated in the episcopal see of Squillace, in Southern Calabria, was founded in the second half of the twelfth century by a man called *Gerasimos Atoulinos*, even if the *Life* of St John the Harvester assigns the paternity of this monastery to the saint (Borsari 1953). At any rate, the story of this monastery remains unknown for the first decades; the Greek notarial deeds from this monastery have been published (Mercati, Giannelli and Guillou 1980). Although these archives kept documents written in the 1100s, no *Leontios* has been found, not even a monk called *Leo* (*Leontios* and *Leo* are

often interchangeable). The only *Leontios* known gives his subscription in a document dated 1127–28 (deed n. 11, 86–91, here 91, l. 33): Λεόντιος ὁ τοῦ Νικηφόρου τοῦ Φηλόρη πρωτοπαπᾶ. However, he is not necessarily a monk and, even if he were a monk, his autograph subscription, written in a clumsy script, proves that he cannot be a copyist (see the photograph n. 10). When Athanasios Chalkeopoulos accomplished, at Cardinal Bessarion's request, a general visit of all the “Basilian” monasteries in Southern Italy, in 1457–58, he visited St John the Harvester and listed the inventory of all its goods. The monastery still had numerous manuscripts, of which a great number of liturgical manuscripts (*contacarium* or *condacarium*, *catanictum*, etc.) among which, perhaps, there was also *Vat. gr.* 2008: Guillou and Laurent 1960, 91–2.

- 9 This book is actually a sixteen-page opusculum without any title, and evidently written hastily. After the preface, however, there is this title: ΕΙΣ ΤΟΝ ΟΣΙΟΝ ΒΕΝΕΔΙΚΤΟΝ ΥΜΝΟΙ ΤΟΥ ΟΣΙΟΥ ΝΕΙΛΟΥ – A S. BENEDETTO INNI DI S. NILO.
- 10 Cozza-Luzi 1880.
- 11 Gassisi 1906.
- 12 Rousseau 1973.
- 13 Déroche 2004; Sansterre 1991, 1993, 1997, 2006.
- 14 See: D'Aiuto 2004; Follieri 1981; Follieri 1964. A reprint of Gassisi's edition, along with new commentaries, is to be seen in Raquez and Fyrigos 1980.
- 15 *Offices byzantins* 1981.
- 16 Peters-Custot 2009.
- 17 Let us note that, at the very time of Neilos the Younger, the relics had been claimed by the monastery of Fleury-sur-Loire, in France, allegedly after one of these pious robberies that are entirely justified in the Middle Ages: see the by now classical book by Geary: Geary 1978 and, on the specific case of St Benedict's body contended between Fleury and Montecassino, Galdi 2014.
- 18 *Offices byzantins* 1981.
- 19 I owe my still limited knowledge of the Byzantine liturgical production to Getcha 2009 and D'Aiuto 2004.
- 20 Gassisi 1906, 41–4.
- 21 The *Orthros* is the first liturgical service of the day, in the morning, before the rising sun (*Matins*).
- 22 Gassisi 1906, 44–52. Olivier Rousseau published this *kanon* (Rousseau 1973, 1117–24) with the Latin translation by Cozza-Luzi facing the Greek text. Rousseau however presented only the alphabetical parts of the hymn, the most interesting from our perspective.
- 23 Giovanelli 1972, Chapter 13.
- 24 Karwasinska 1962, 69–84.
- 25 On this subject, see also the essay by David Kahlous in this volume.
- 26 See Karwasinska 1959: the author aims at demonstrating that many details of *Adalbert's Life* are from the saint himself, when, following Neilos's advice, he went to Rome and to the monastery of St Alessio, on the Aventine, where the first draft of the first hagiography – attributed to John Canaparius – was written at Emperor Otto III's request, very soon after Adalbert's martyrdom. St Alexius is a monastery known for having welcomed at this time a double community of “Latin” and “Greek” monks. In the B version of *Adalbert's Life*, a Greek word has been badly rewritten by a Latin copyist, which is taken as proving that two linguistic communities lived together in St Alessio (Karwasinska 1959, 22). On this Roman monastery of St Alexius, see Hamilton 1961 and 1965. See also Kahlous in this volume at pp. 282–307.

- 27 Giovanelli 1972, chapter 13. Neilos's reputation was probably quite important, and strengthened by Neilos's previous diplomatic functions that gave him the stature of the Holy Man (as described by Peter Brown), who acts like an ascetic counsellor within the powerful circles. His monastic fame is also high among the Latin monastic *milieu* of Southern Italy. Adalbert's hagiographer faithfully reveals Neilos's charismatic dimension for the Latin monks.
- 28 To strengthen this interpretation, let us mention the fact that Neilos, when asked by the Montecassino monks to give his opinion about the differences in practices between the Eastern and Western churches (re. monastic life, obedience or fasting) always replied by giving the answers that were expected by his Latin public. If Neilos had addressed an Italo-Greek public, his ascetic prescriptions would not have been the same. I have studied the contextual variants in Neilos's speeches in Peters-Custot forthcoming.
- 29 Gregorio Magno 2001.
- 30 On Odo of Cluny's journey to Rome and the spreading of the monastic reform in Rome and at Montecassino, see Rosé 2008, 256 ff.
- 31 Giovanelli 1972, Chapter 13.
- 32 Peters-Custot 2015.
- 33 Giovanelli 1972, Chapter 13.
- 34 Gregorio Magno 2001, 7, 16–17.
- 35 Rousseau 1973, 1125–7.
- 36 In the *Dialogues*, Benedict's vision of his sister Scholastica's soul, in the form of a dove, in chapter 34, comes before the vision of Germanus's soul (the bishop of Capua) in chapter 35: this order is inverted in Neilos's hymn.
- 37 For example Neilos evokes the theme of 'living in oneself,' which is not a detail in the *Dialogues*, but the subject of a long discourse and explanation. The posterity, particularly in Western Christianity, of this theme, for the reflection around the "new monasticism" and "sensible eremitism" in the eleventh century, can be seen, for example, in the letter that Bruno, founder of the monastery of the Grande Chartreuse, wrote to his friend Raoul Le Verd, in order to lead him to join him in Calabria, where himself had a contemplative life, and where all the conditions are gathered to "life in oneself." I refer for this subject to Peters-Custot 2014, 291–3.
- 38 Grégoire le Grand 1978–1980.
- 39 Gregorio Magno 2001.
- 40 Joseph the Hymnographer 1898.
- 41 Gregorio Magno 2001, introduction, XII–XIII.
- 42 See Gassisi 1906, 70.
- 43 Giovanelli 1972, chapter 4.
- 44 I refer to the list of manuscripts established by Rigotti for his edition of the Greek version of the second book of the *Dialogues* (Gregorio Magno 2001, introduction, XII–XX). For example, among the oldest manuscripts, we find one, dated tenth century, and another, dated eleventh century, in the Vatopedi monastery (Athos); another, dated tenth century, at Kutlumus monastery; another one, dated ninth century, in the monastery of St John the Theologian on Patmos. Many copies are now in the Vatican Library, among which some are dated tenth century, etc. Photios's library mentions this very same translation of Pope Gregory the Great's *Dialogues*, so he must have read it: Οὗτος ὁ Γρηγόριος πολλὰς μὲν καὶ ἄλλας ψυχωφελεῖς τῇ Ῥωμαίων συνετάξατο βίβλους, ὁμίλιας τε τὰ εὐαγγέλια ἀναπτύσσων προσωμίλησεν· ἀτὰρ δὴ καὶ βίους τῶν κατὰ τὴν Ἰταλίαν ἀξιολόγους, καὶ διηγήματα σωτηρίαν ἐκπαιδεύοντα συγκαταμίξας τούτοις, ἐν τέσσαρσι διαλόγοις ἐφιλοπονῆσατο. Ἀλλὰ γὰρ πέντε καὶ ἐξήκοντα καὶ ἑκατὸν ἔτη οἱ τὴν Ῥωμαίων φωνὴν ἀφιέντες τῆς ἐκ τῶν

πόνων αὐτοῦ ὠφελείας μόνοι ἀπήλαυνον. Ζαχαρίας δέ, ὃς τοῦ ἀποστολικοῦ ἀνδρὸς ἐκείνου χρόνοις ὕστερον τοῖς εἰρημένοις κατέστη διάδοχος, τὴν ἐν τῇ Ῥωμαϊκῇ μόνῃ συγκλειομένην γνῶσιν καὶ ὠφέλειαν εἰς τὴν Ἑλλάδα γλώσσαν ἐξαπλώσας κοινὸν τὸ κέρδος τῇ οἰκουμένῃ πάσῃ φιλανθρώπως ἐποίησατο. Οὐ τοὺς διαλόγους δὲ καλουμένους μόνους ἀλλὰ καὶ ἄλλους αὐτοῦ ἀξιολόγους πόνους ἐξελληνίσαι ἔργον ἔθετο (Photios 1973, 252).

- 45 Joseph stressed many times (first and fourth Odes) the fact that Benedict mortified his flesh and dominated his passions, referred to at *Dialogues* II, chapter 2, when Benedict threw himself in a thorn bush to overcome his temptations. Neilos said nothing about this. Joseph's fifth Ode referred to Benedict's miracle of the oil jar filled by the saint's action (*Dialogues* II, chapter 28), about which Neilos also remained silent, as well as to the miraculous vision of the Earth shining under a unique ray (*Dialogues*, II, chapter 35 and Joseph's fifth Ode: Ὡς καθαρὸς τὴν ψυχὴν σὺ ἐν ἐκτάσι γεγωνὼς ἐβλεψας πᾶσαν τὴν γῆν ὡς ὑπὸ ἀκτίνα λαμπομένην μίαν Θεοῦ σε τιμῶντος παμμάκαρε Βενέδικτε: Joseph the Hymnographer 1898, 87). Let us mention that this very same experience of Benedict's cosmic vision gained, on the contrary, some success later on, among the Byzantine mystical milieu, around Gregory Palamas. On this subject, see Delouis 2015.
- 46 "Bringing a miracle about, in the name of Christ, thanks to your prayer, O blessed Benedict, a water source spouts; you invoke the Dispenser of goods and she keeps on (flowing), proclaiming (to all) the wonder" (cf. *Dialogues* II, Chapter 5).
- 47 "The foolish conceived the absurd and perverse purpose to have you dead through a poisonous beverage, you, who were protected by the divine hand of the Creator of the Universe; being unmasked they went exposed by the prescience that was in you, o Father Benedict."
- 48 Joseph, Ode 9: "You appeared like a great sun, radiating the Creation by formidable wonders and by your virtues' brightness, O God-Carrier [*Theophoros*] Father. So we celebrate your really radiant memory, we are lit up in our hearts' feelings." See Neilos' *Kanon*, Ode 9: "Like the morning star // that sparkles in the West // you illuminated the souls of the believers."
- 49 I owe my knowledge about this technical subject to my colleague and friend Thomas Granier, who is currently studying Cassinian poetry, and gave me access to vast extracts of his work before publication. I am most grateful to him for his generosity.
- 50 Let us mention here Marcus's poetry (sixth century?): *Versus in Benedicti laudem* (BHL 1103) edited in Rocca 1978; and the poems composed by Abbot Bertarius (856 – †883): *Versus de miraculis almi patris Benedicti* (BHL 1107), edited in Traube 1896. What I have seen of Thomas Granier's work on these collections makes me think that there is nothing in common between them and Neilos's hymns.
- 51 Edition Neff 1908, poetry n. 6, "Loblied aud den heiligen Benedikt," 23–34 and n. 7, "Zweites Loblied auf den heiligen Benedikt," 35–37. Paul the Deacon evokes these poems in his *Historia Longobardorum: Diebus Iustiniani orthodoxi imperatoris beatus Benedictus pater, qui monachorum regulam instituit et prius in loco, qui Sublacus dicitur, qui ab urbe Roma quadraginta milibus abest, et postea in castro Casino, quod Arx appellatur, et magnis vitae meritis et apostolicis virtutibus fulsit. Cuius vitam, sicut notum est, beatus papa Gregorius in suis dialogis suavi sermone composuit. Ego quoque pro parvitate ingenii mei ad honorem tanti patris singula eius miracula per singula distica elegiaco metro contextui* (quoted in Neff 1908, 25).
- 52 Neff, editor of these two poems, systematically noted, in the margin of Paul's text, the corresponding chapters of Gregory's *Dialogues*. It is thus possible for us to notice the strict fidelity of Paul the Deacon to the pope's work.

- According to Thomas Granier, Paul's version of Benedict's life varies in only two places: when Benedict arrives at Montecassino, Paul adds that angels were going with him; and Paul omits Chapter 19 of Gregory's *Dialogues*. Nevertheless, both details have been neglected by Neilos.
- 53 Neff 1908, 32, vv. 115–16. For this conception of the *vita monastica* as a fight, and monks as warriors, see also v. 147, where the monks are the *sancta phalanx*.
- 54 All the Western saints revered in the Byzantine world are known in the Eastern Empire only through the Greek translation of a Latin original text. Apparently, only St Ambrose of Milan had a Greek tradition of his *Life* that was independent of the Latin tradition – perhaps thanks to his exemplarity for the relationships between sanctity, clergy and imperial power, a recurring theme in Byzantine ideology and religion. On this subject, see Follieri 1964, 264.
- 55 On this text, I refer to the old and unfortunately scarcely available work of a Benedictine monk, Odilo Heiming (Heiming 1929), with edition of the Greek text. I owe the knowledge of this article to Olivier Delouis, and I thank him gratefully.
- 56 This version of *Patm. gr.* 266 leaves many other chapters out, that are not to be found in Neilos's hymns either: from chapters 17–21, chapters 25–26, and chapters 30–31.
- 57 “Bien que ce livre [*Dialogues*, book 2] ait été traduit en grec par le pape Zacharie (752), plusieurs indices font croire que c'est du texte latin qu'il [Neilos] s'est servi”: Rousseau 1973, 1125.
- 58 Gassisi 1906, 70.
- 59 An accurate study demonstrates that the vocabulary used by Neilos and by the *Dialogues* in Greek is only rarely the same. Neilos, in his *Kanon*, when explaining that Benedict founded twelve monasteries (παμμάκαρ Βενεδίκτη δώδεκα γὰρ συνέστησας αἰνεσιν Χριστῷ μὴνὰς αἰεὶ προσάγειν . . .), used a word (συνέστησας) quite near the sentence in the Greek *Dialogues* (. . . Βενέδικτος δώδεκα αὐτόθι μοναστήρια τῇ τοῦ Χριστοῦ δυνάμει συνεστήσατο 1906, 74), it would be the only example of “slight proximity” between Neilos and the Greek translation of the Latin *Dialogues*. Other similarities are however to be seen, in particular in stanza 10.
- 60 Σὺ, πᾶτερ, θεῖον // νόμον ἡμῖν καταλέλοιπας // ὁδηγίαν // πᾶσαν μοναχῶν, // καὶ κλησιν αὐτῷ // **ρέγουσαν** ἐπέθηκας.
- 61 Peters-Custot 2012.
- 62 See Chapter 36, entitled: Περί τοῦ συγγραφέντος παρ' αὐτοῦ μοναχικοῦ **κανόνος**. And again, later on: Διετυπώσατο γὰρ τοὺς τῶν μοναχῶν **κανόνας** διακρίσει ἐξαιρέτῳ καὶ λόγῳ φωταιδεῖ (Gregorio Magno 2001, 107).
- 63 Gregorio Magno 2001, 2–9.
- 64 Grégoire le Grand 1978–1980, I: 165.
- 65 As noticed by Rigotti, who publishes the Latin version (as established by Adalbert de Vogüé) facing the Greek text, this latter presents an appreciable expansion in comparison to the Latin one. These developments are mostly, but not exclusively, the consequence of emphasis concerning the way of defining Benedict. Rigotti considers that the translator aimed at making accessible to a Greek-speaking reader this figure of an ascetic miracle-maker that could be like an Eastern equivalent (Gregorio Magno 2001, 115–16). However, Neilos's rhetoric remained far from these hyperbolic ways of naming Benedict, which had no influence on his hymns.
- 66 Grégoire le Grand 1978–1980, II: 164–6: *Mira sunt et multum stupenda quae dicis. Nam in aqua ex petra producta Moysen, in ferro vero quod ex profundo aquae rediit Heliseum, in aquae itinere Petrum, in corui oboedentia, Heliam, in luctu autem mortis inimici David video.* Cf. Ex. 17:6; Mt. 14:22–23; 2 Kings 6:1–7.

- 67 Θαυμαστά εἰσιν ὄντως καὶ πάννυ ἐκπλήττοντά με ἅπερ ἔφη. Ἐπὶ γὰρ τοῦ ὕδατος τοῦ διὰ τῆς τοῦ μακαρίου προσευχῆς ἐκ τοῦ ὄρους ποταμηδὸν βλύσαντος, τὸν Μωϋσῆν κατανοῶ· ἐν δὲ τῷ σιδηρῷ ἐργαλείῳ, τῷ ἐκ τοῦ βυθοῦ τῶν ὑδάτων τοῦ λάκκου ἀνελθόντι, Ἐλισσαῖον ὀρῶ· ἐν τῇ τοῦ ὕδατος πορείᾳ Πέτρον νοῶ· ἐν δὲ τῇ τοῦ κόρακος ὑπακοῇ Ἠλίαν βλέπω (Gregorio Magno 2001, 43).
- 68 Neilos used the comparison with Peter walking upon the water, Moses with his stick, Eliseus concerning the iron rod extracted from the water. Let us notice that Neilos did not repeat the story of the obedient crow as for Elias, since, for this miracle, he chose to focus on Benedict's charity regarding his enemy Florentius.
- 69 *Nam die tertio ad usum proprium reuersus, vagari tempore orationis coepit: Dialogues* II, Chapter 4; Grégoire le Grand 1978–1980, II: 150.
- 70 Gregorio Magno 2001, 31.
- 71 *Dialogues* II, Chapter 3, 14, Grégoire le Grand 1978–1980, II: 150: *Tunc quoque bonae spei suas soboles Euthicius Maurum, Tertullius vero patricius Placidum tradidit.*
- 72 Gregorio Magno 2001, 29.
- 73 *Ibid.*
- 74 Grégoire le Grand 1978–1980, I: 164–91.
- 75 *Ibid.*, I: 179–82.
- 76 *Ibid.*, II: 150.
- 77 Follieri 1964, 256 ff.
- 78 This latter is a special case, since he died in the Eastern part of the Empire. The saints's death-place had a huge importance for the development of their cult.
- 79 We cannot know if Joseph the Hymnographer's Sicilian origin had a minor importance in his career and above all in his liturgical production. Let us note that Grottaferrata's second *higumenos*, the monk Paul, wrote a liturgical hymn in honor of St Martin of Tours (Gassisi 1906, 56–62). On this saint's cult in Byzantine Southern Italy, see Jacob 2008.
- 80 Monks, in Benedict's story, wanted to move the rock in order to build new cells. Neilos's parallel is quite coherent with this context.
- 81 Jn 2:4: Λέγει αὐτῇ ὁ Ἰησοῦς· Τί ἐμοὶ καὶ σοί, γύναι;
- 82 Cf. God's words to Saul / Paul on the Damascus Road (Acts 9:4): "Saul, Saul, why do you persecute me?" (*Saule, Saule, quid me persequeris?* / Σαοῦλ, Σαῦλ, τί με διώκεις;). In the *Dialogues*, when Benedict, in order to settle at Montecassino, destroys an old temple dedicated to Apollo, and expels the devil, the latter shouts: *Maledicte, non Benedicte, quid tecum habes, quid me persequeris?* The Greek translation is absolutely faithful word for word (Gregorio Magno 2001, 45, ll. 154–56): Κατηραμένε, κατηραμένε, καὶ οὐκ εὐλογημένε, τί ἔχεις μετ' ἐμοῦ; Τί με καταδιώκεις;
- 83 On this identification see Gassisi 1906, 79.
- 84 Giovanelli 1972, chapter 3.
- 85 *Dialogues* II, chapter 2.
- 86 "Since your childhood, as a monk, bearing the Cross, you followed the Almighty; and mortifying your flesh, O Blessed, you were worthy of his Life, illustrious (Father). Subjecting yourself to God's law, you mastered the movements of the passions through ascetic exploits, and you were filled with the grace of impassibility."
- 87 Giovanelli 1972, chapter 1.
- 88 Βδελυξάμενος τοῖνον τῶν γραμμάτων τὴν διδασχὴν, καταλείψας τε τὸν οἶκον καὶ τὰ πατρῶα αὐτοῦ πράγματα, μόνῳ Θεῷ ἀρέσαι ἐπιθυμήσας, τοῦ ἁγίου

- καὶ μονήρους βίου τὸ σχῆμα ἐπεπόθησεν (Gregorio Magno 2001, 11, ll. 13–15).
- 89 Giovanelli 1972, chapter 1.
- 90 Neilos is presented as an outspoken learned monk in his own hagiography, a quite distinctive profile in the Italo-Greek saints' *milieu*, where education was not so usual among the figures of holy men. On this subject see Peters-Custot 2009, 210–14.
- 91 *Dialogues* II, Chapter 1, 4, Gregorio Magno 2001, 15.
- 92 Cf. ἄλλος ἐδείχθη Βασιλείος. Gassisi already noticed that this expression was in the fifth stanza of a κονδάκιον in honor of St Theodore Stoudite, and that it certainly came from this liturgical poem. Jean-Baptiste Pitra mentions this hymn in Pitra 1876, 628. Among the different Byzantine anonymous hymns, there are some texts that Pitra includes in the group of hymns composed in the *milieu* of the monastery of St John-Baptist of Stoudios in Constantinople (Pitra 1876, 445). Some are from Theodore himself, others have been written after him, in particular the n. LXVI, Pitra 1876, 627–8, in honor of Theodore Stoudite. The fifth stanza is as follows: Τῷ νομοθήτῃ τῷ θεσπεσίῳ τῆς Χριστοῦ ἐκκλησίας, Βασιλείῳ σοφῇ, ἀκολουθήσας πανάριστα. The manuscript where this hymn is written, the *Corsin.*, fol. 13, is described in Pitra 1876, 663–73 under the title “Tropologium Corsinium” (*sic*). It may have been the property of the abbey of Grottaferrata (Pitra 1876, 663). However, it seems posterior to Neilos the Younger (middle of the eleventh century).
- 93 Giovanelli 1972, chapter 13.
- 94 Cf. *supra* n. 30.
- 95 That is why I have inserted a colon between “you named it” and “*Regula*” (with a capital letter, like a title).
- 96 Cf. Peters-Custot forthcoming.
- 97 Rocchi 1883, quoted by Gassisi 1906, 71–2.
- 98 Rousseau 1973, 1127–8.
- 99 The main examples are: 1) καύχημα λατίνων καὶ καλλώπισμα. 2) χαίροις, Ῥωμαίων φωστήρ, // Καμπανίας ἀγλάϊσμα // Χαίροις, Νεαπόλεως // τεῖχος ἀκαταμάχητον. 3) Γήθεται Νουρσία // κανχᾶται ἡ Ῥώμη // Κασίνον ὄρος δὲ // ὑπερκανχᾶται, σοφῇ. 4) Βενεδίκτε, τῶν λατίνων λαμπτήρ. 5) Ἥλιος ὥσπερ, πάτερ, τῇ δύσει ἀνατείλας. 6) Λατίνων κλέος, etc.
- 100 Joseph the Hymnographer, on the contrary, made no association between Benedict and the Western space.
- 101 Campania briefly appears in Chapter 21 and 28 of the second book of the *Dialogues*; neither chapter is inserted in Neilos's hymns.
- 102 Let us note a detail: Naples is precisely the place where, in the middle of the tenth century, an innovative assimilation between St Basil the Great and Greek forms of monasticism appeared for the first time. This innovation is visible through documents relative to the Neapolitan monasteries of Sts Sergius-and-Bacchus, and of Sts Theodore-and-Sebastian, around the years 950–980: Neapolitan people who integrated these monasteries have a document called *promissio* written, where they promise to follow “St Basil's rule.” These documents are copied on the very same documentary pattern written for people entering Benedictine Neapolitan monasteries, where the rule mentioned is that of St Benedict. This new Western vision of Eastern monasticism had been created by copying the relationship between Western monasticism and St Benedict's rule, and by adapting this purely Western model to an imaginary relationship (in fact a false one) between Byzantine monasticism and a “Rule of St Basil” that did not, in fact, exist. On the

subject see Peters-Custot forthcoming. I established in this paper that this adaptation, in Naples, of a Benedictine model, owes much to Montecassino and its influence on Campania. One is bound to be struck by this coincidence and it is impossible not to link, on one hand, what was going on in Naples and in Montecassino at the very moment when Neilos reached Campania and settled there, and, on the other hand, this passage of Neilos's hymns where Basil and Benedict are given the same status through the words ἄλλος ἐδείχθη Βασίλειος.

- 103 Τῷ νομοθέτῃ τῶν ἀσκητῶν // Ναζηραίων τε καὶ τῶν Ῥωμαίων // ὁ χορὸς Μοντεκασίνου βοήσατε νῦν.
- 104 Gassisi 1906, 72: "Si noti la forma latino-medioevale (o volgare) del vocabolo Μοντεκασίνου, trasportata da S. Nilo nell'uso greco con la sola modificazione della desinenza finale. Negli altri luoghi si ha la forma usuale greca ὁρὸς κασίνου oppure τοῦ Κασινοῦ."
- 105 Peters-Custot 2006.
- 106 Follieri 1964, 251.
- 107 Paroli 2007. The author analyzes the knowledge the author could have of Gregory's *Dialogues* in the Greek version, linked obviously to the manuscript *Vat. gr.* 1666 (Paroli 2007, 131).

Appendix

Neilos's hymns in honor of Saint Benedict of Nursia

Order of service in honor of Saint Benedict

Μηνὶ μαρτίῳ καὶ . . . καὶ τοῦ ὁσίου
πατρὸς ἡμῶν Βενεδίκτου ἡγουμένου
Κασίνου

**Στιχηρὰ τοῦ ὁσίου πατρὸς ἡμῶν
Βενεδίκτου·**

Ἦχος δ΄. Πρὸς· Ὁ ἐξ ὑψίστου κληθεῖς

Τὸν ἐν τοῖς τέρασιν μέγιστον ὀφθέντα
φωστήρα ὑμνουμένον σε,
ὃν ἐχαρίτωσε
Χριστός, οὗ σθένει τὰ ξόανα
τὰ τῶν δαιμόνων
ἐξαφανίσαι
πάτερ, δεδύνησαι,
πιστεύσας λαλήσαντι·
Δύναμιν πᾶσαν ἐχθροῦ
καταπατεῖν ἰδοῦ δίδωμι
ἐγὼ ὅ πάντα
μετασκευάζων τὴν ἐξουσίαν θεός.
Ὅν ἐκδυσώπει,
ὀσιώτατε Βενεδίкте,
ὡς ἔχων πολλὴν πρὸς αὐτὸν
παρρησίαν, τοῦ δοῦναι
τῶν πταισμάτων ἡμῶν ἄφεσιν.

ὁ<μοιον>.

Νοῦν σου τῶν κάτω τελείως ἀνυψώσας
πρὸς τὰ ἐπουράνια
Πνεύματος χάριτι,
προβλεπτικῆς κατηξίωσαι,
παμμάκαρ, ὅπως
δωρεᾶς ὅθεν τῆς μεταστάσεως
τῆς σῆς προεμήνυσας
ᾧραν, πανένδοξε,
τῶν ὀρεκτῶν ἐφιέμενος
ἐπαπολαῦσαι,
σκιὰς ἐάσας καὶ τὰ αἰνίγματα
τῷ ἀκροτάτῳ·

March the 21st, . . . and of our holy
father Benedict, higumenos of
Cassino

***Stichera* of our holy father Benedict**

Ichos 4, to the tune: “O Called by the
Almighty”

We sing you in our hymns
you who by your wonders
appeared as a very great light.
Christ filled you with His grace,
so that, with His strength,
you could destroy
the statues of the devils, O Father,
you who believed the word
of Him Who said:
“Look, I am God who transforms all
things,
I give you the power to tread on
all power of the enemy.”
Pray to Him,
Most Holy Benedict,
as you have a great confidence upon Him,
that He may grant us
the forgiveness of our faults.

To the same tune.

You perfectly elevated your mind
from earth to Heaven
by the grace of the Spirit,
you have been counted worthy, truly,
of the gift of prophecy, O Blessed;
That is why you announced
the time of your passage to heaven,
O most Venerable,
moving toward the object of your
desire,
leaving the shadows
and the riddles

(Continued)

Appendix (Continued)

οὐ τῇ θείᾳ ἐλλάμπει, πάτερ,
πταισμάτων τὴν ζόφωσιν
Βενεδίκτη, μὴ παύσῃ
ἀπελαύνων τῶν ψυχῶν ἡμῶν.

Ἄλλο. Ἦχος πλ. δ΄. Πρὸς Οἱ νομοθέ-
ται τοῦ Ἰσραὴλ

Τῷ νομοθέτῃ τῶν ἀσκητῶν
Ναζηραίων τε καὶ τῶν Ῥωμαίων
ὁ χορὸς Μοντεκασίνου βοήσατε νῦν·
Ἴδε βουνός,
ὃν αὐτὸς ἐπόθησας·
Ἴδε ναός,
ὃν αὐτὸς ἐδόξασας,
τάφῳ κατακείμενος·
ἀλλὰ δακρύνοντες θερμῶς βοῶμεν·
Μὴ ἐλλείπῃς τοῦ πρεσβεύειν,
αὐτὸς γὰρ οἶδας,
ὥς ἐν θαλάσῃ πλοῖον,
ἡμᾶς χειμαζομένους·
αὐτὸς γὰρ εἰ καὶ ποιμὴν καὶ φωστήρ,
Βενεδίκτη, τοῦ κόσμου.

Στιχηρὰ ἕτερα

Ἦχος πλ. δ΄. πρὸς Ὡ τοῦ παραδόξου

Πάτερ Βενεδίκτη ἐνδοξε,
Σὺ τὸν σταυρὸν τοῦ Χριστοῦ
ἐπὶ ὤμων ἀράμενος,
κατοικεῖν ἐπόθησας
ἐν σπηλαίοις καὶ ὄρεσιν
καὶ ταῖς ἐρήμοις
καὶ ταῖς ὁπαῖς ταῖς τῆς Γῆς,
ἐν ἐγκρατεῖᾳ
καὶ προσευχῇ ἐκτενεῖ,
ἀκτημοσύνη τε·
ὅθεν ἐρημάτισας
τοῦ παντουργοῦ
Πνεύματος, αἰδόμε,ν
δοχεῖον εὐχρηστον.
<ὁμοιον>.
Ὡ Βενεδίκτη πανόλβιε,
σὲ Ἐλισσαῖον σαφῶς
νέον ἄλλον ἐγνώκαμεν·
καὶ γὰρ ἀμιγλώμενος
τούτῳ, ὃ πολυθαύμαστε,
ἐκ τῶν ὑδάτων
αὐθι ἀνήγαγες
ὥσπερ ἐκεῖνος
σὺ τὸ σιδήριον·
Πέτρος δ' ὥς αὐπαλιν
ἐφ' ὑδάτων ὑπερθεν
πεζοβαδῶν

for what is the highest.
Do not cease, o Father Benedict,
to expel from our souls
the darkness of sins
by his divine illumination.

Another. Plagal Ichos 4th, to the tune:
“The legislators of Israel”

To the legislator of the ascetics
of the Nazarenes and of the Romans
Let the choir of Montecassino now
sound a hymn.
Here is the hill
which yourself have yearned for.
Here is the temple
that you have glorified,
where you rest in your grave.
But let us implore fervently,
shedding tears.
Do not fail to intercede for us,
for you know that,
as a ship in the sea,
we are shaken by the tempest;
as you are yourself shepherd
and light of the world, O Benedict.

Other Stichera

Plagal ichos 4th: to the tune: “Of the
amazing . . .”

Venerable Father Benedict,
you carried the cross of Christ
on your shoulders.
You desired to live
in caves and mountains
and in deserts
and in the wombs of earth,
with self-control
and in diligent prayer
and in poverty.
That is why you enriched
of the all-mighty
Spirit, O you worthy of our songs,
the docile receptacle (of your soul).
<Similar stanza>
O most happy Benedict,
we clearly recognized in you
a new Eliseus;
Thus competing with him,
O most admirable,
you too raised
instantly
the iron from the waters,
as he had done;
and like Peter,
again walking on water,

Πλάκιδον ἀνείλκυσας
θανατηφόρου βυθοῦ.
ὅ<μοιον>.
Χαίροις, Βενεδίκτη πάνσοφε,
χαίροις, Ῥωμαίων φωστήρ,
Καμπανίας ἀγλαΐσμα·
Χαίροις, Νεαπόλεως
τεῖχος ἀκαταμάχητον·
τῆς ἐκκλησίας
χαίροις τὸ στήριγμα·
καὶ ὀρθοδόξων
χαίροις τὸ καύχημα·
χαίροις καλλώπισμα
καὶ τὸ σεμνολόγημα
τῶν μοναστῶν·
οὕσπερ διαφύλαττε
εἰς τοὺς αἰῶνας, ἀμήν.

Κάθισμα εἰς τὸ Θεὸς κύριος·

Ἦχος β´. Πρὸς Ἀλιὺ ἐμιμήσω:

Βενεδίκτη, πατέρων
ὁ ἀγελάρχης,
ταῖς πρεσβείαις σου ῥῦσαι
πάσης ἀνάγκης
τοὺς σὲ καλοῦντας,
καὶ πόθῳ γεραίροντας,
τὴν φωτοφόρον
καὶ θεῖαν σου βίωσιν·
τῇ σὴ γὰρ σκέπη προσήλθομεν·
διὰ ὑπὲρ ἡμῶν
δυσώπει τὸν κύριον.

Στιχῆρον·

Ἦχος πλ. δ´· πρὸς τοῖς συλλαβοῦσί σε

τοῖς φαρμακεύσας ψευδαδέλφοις
ἀνεχόμενος οὕτως ἐβόας, ὅσι·
Εἰ καὶ ἐπατάξατε τῇ προθέσει
καὶ παρεσκευάσατε
ἐξ ὑμῶν ἀποφεύγειν ἀδιακρίτως,

ἡδυνάμην τέρας ἐξαίσιον
λεγεῶν παραδοῦναι δαιμόνων·
ἀλλὰ μακροθυμῶ
ἵνα μιμητής,
οὐ ἐφίεμαι < . . . >
< . . . > γένωμαι Λόγου,
ἄδηλα καὶ κρύφια
μυσταγωγούντός με.

you rescued Placidus
from the abyss of death.
<Similar stanza.>
Hail, O wisest Benedict!
Hail, light of the Romans!
Ornament of the Campania!
Hail, of Naples
invincible rampart!
Hail, support of the Church!
Hail, pride of the Orthodox!
Hail, jewel
and glory
of the monks,
whom you protect
for ever and ever, amen.

Kathisma to: “The Lord is God”

Ichos 2 to the tune: “You imitated
Elias”

O Benedict, of the fathers the shepherd,
by your prayers save from all peril
those who invoke you
and worship with love
the splendor of your holy life,
for we move under your protection.
Therefore, implore
for us the Lord.

Sticheron Verse

Plagal ichos 4th, to the tune: “To those
who are united to you”

To the false brothers who had a poison
prepared,
O saint, you told, recovering:
“Even if you struck me intentionally
and were prepared by yourselves to flee
unpunished,
I could have given
a terrible sign against the legion of
demons,
but I bear patiently
so that I may become the imitator
of the One toward whom I reach,
of the Word who reveals to me
invisible and hidden things.”

Kanon for our Father Saint Benedict Higoumenos of Monte cassino Abbey

Τῇ ἐσπέρᾳ κανόν, φέρων
ἀκροστιχίδα· Α.Β.Γ.Δ.
ἐν δὲ τοῖς θεοτοκίοις·
ΝΕΙΛΟΥ <ΩΔΗ>.
Ἦχος πλ. β΄

Ὡδὴ Α΄.

Κύματι θαλάσσης· τὸν
κρύψαντα:

Ἄνοιξόν μου στόμα,
καὶ τράνωσον γλῶτταν,
καὶ νοῦν μου φώτισον,
Τριάς ἁγία σεπτή,
ταῖς καθαφαῖς ικεσίαις
Βενεδίκτου τοῦ ὁσίου σου,
τοῦ καλῶς Βιώσαντος
καὶ σοὶ εὐαρεστήσαντος.

Βίον ἡγνισμένον,
ἐκ βρέφους ποθήσας,
σαντὸν ἀνάθημα
Χριστῷ προσήγαγες·
ὅθεν θαυμάτων τὴν χάριν
ἐκομίσω, ἀξιάγαστε
Βενέδικτε, καύχημα
λατίνων καὶ καλλώπισμα.

Γήθεται Νουρσία,
καυχᾶται ἡ Ῥώμη·
Κασίνον ὄρος δὲ
Ὑπερκαυχᾶται, σοφέ,
τὸ παναοίδιμον σῶμα
τυμβευθὲν ἔχον, αἰοίδιμε,
καθ' ἐκάστην ψάλλον σοι·
Ἐνδόξως γὰρ δεδόξασται.

Kanon for the evening, bearing
the akrostich: Α. Β. Γ. Δ. . . .
in the *theotokia*:
NEILOS'S ODE
Plagal ichos 2

Ode 1.

[Hirmos.] The one who hides, in
the waves of the sea. . .

Open my lips
and give clearness to my tongue
and enlighten my mind,
o Holy and Venerable Trinity,
by the most pure prayers
of Benedict, your saint,
who lived in perfection,
and was pleasing to You.

Craving for a pure life
from an early age,
you offered yourself
in self-offering to Christ;
That is why you received
the gift of miracles,
O Benedict, worthy of admiration,
Pride and ornament of the Latin
people.

Nursia rejoices,
Rome loudly boasts,
But Monte cassino is the most
proud
O wise one, to have your all-
worshiped body entombed, o
worthy of praise,
and to chant for you every day.
For it is worthily magnified.

Θεοτοκίον

Νύξ με ἀγνωσίας,
παρθένε, καλύπτει·
παθῶν ἄχλὺς δέ με
περικυκλοῖ ζοφερά·
λάμπων μοι φῶς μετανοίας,
ἢ τὸ φῶς τοῦ κόσμου τέξασα,
καὶ τὸν νοῦν μου φώτισον,
εὐλογημένη, δέσποινα.

Theotokion

The night of ignorance
shrouds me, O Virgin,
and the somber mist
of the passions surrounds me.
Let the light of repentance shine
in me,
you who gave birth to the light of
the world
and enlighten my spirit
O most blessed Sovereign Lady.

Ὠδὴ Γ´.

Σὲ τὸν ἐπὶ ὑδάτων
ἐδράσαντα:

Ode 3.

[Hirmos]: You who stay on the
water. . .

Δείξας τὴν θεῖαν χάριν,
ἐτέλεσας
μαγίδα κεκλασμένην
ἀνακεκαινισμένην·
καὶ ἐν σπηλαίῳ κατώκησας
ἕξ μῆνας καὶ τριάκοντα,
ὑποταττόμενος
Ῥωμανῷ Χριστοῦ θεράποντι.

Demonstrating the divine grace, *Dialogues, II, 1*
you repaired entirely
the broken ladel
making it new again;
and you lived thirty-six months
in a cave
under the supervision
of Romanus, the servant of Christ.

Ἐξέστησαν οἱ φιάλῃ
ποτίσαι σε
ἰὼν θανατηφόρον,
παμμάκαρ, βουληθέντες,
διαρράγεισαν ἰδόντες εὐθὺς
σταυροῦ τῷ τύπῳ, ὅσιε,
οὓς καὶ ἀνέτρεψας,
Βενεδίκτη, τῶν λατίνων
λαμπτήρ.

Those who, in a cup, *Dialogues, II, 3*
wanted to make you drink
a deadly poison
O Blessed, were stunned
seeing it immediately shattered
by the sign of the Cross, O Holy,
And you upset them
Benedict, torch of the Latins.

Ζῆλος θεοσεβείας
ἀνέφλεξε
τὴν καθαρὰν ψυχὴν σου,
θεόφρον Βενεδίκτη,
καὶ καταλείψας τοὺς
ἄφρονας,
ἐν σεαυτῷ γενόμενος
καλῶς ἐπέστρεψας
ἐν τῷ ἄντρῳ, ὃ κατώκεις τὸ
πρὶν.

The zeal of piety *Dialogues, II, 3*
set on fire
your pure soul
O wise Benedict,
and you abandoned foolish things
living within yourself, rightly,¹
you turned back to the cave
where you lived before.

Θεοτοκίον

Ἐξέλιπε ἐν ὀδύναις
ὁ βίος μου
καὶ συμφοραῖς, παρθένε·
χεῖρα λοιπόν μοι δίδου
ἀπεγνωσμένῳ Ὑπάρχοντι,
μαρία κυριῶνυμε,
καὶ ἀνακράζοντα·
Σῶσον, οἰκτειρόν με,
δέσποινα.

Theotokion

My life is wasting away
in sufferings
and in misfortunes, O Virgin.
Give me your hand now
to me who begin to despair
O Mary, betrothed of the Lord,
and who am crying,
Save me and have mercy on me, O
Sovereign Lady!

(Continued)

Κάθισμα. Ἦχος β΄. Πρὸς·

Ἥλιον ἐμμήσω
τὸν κλεινὸν Βενεδίκτον
δεῦτε προφρόνως
εὐφημήσωμεν, πάντες,
ἀξιοχρέως·
τοῦ γὰρ Κυρίου
θεράπων γενόμενος,
θαυμάτων χάριν
ἀξίως ἀπεύληφεν·
πρὸς ὃν πιστῶς βοήσωμεν·
Χριστὸν ὑπὲρ ἡμῶν
δυσώπει, πανθαύμαστε.

Kathisma. Ichos 2, to the tune:

“You look like the sun.”
Let us all acclaim
the glorious Benedict,
here enthusiastically
and justly.
For, once he became the servant of
the Lord,
he worthily received in return
the gift of miracles.
Let us call to him faithfully:
Pray to Christ insistently for us,
O most admirable.

Ὡδὴ Δ΄.

Τὴν ἐν σταυρῷ σου θείαν
κένωσιν:

Ode 4.

[Hirmos]: At Your divine
emptying on the cross. . .

Ἥλιου δίκην κατελάμπρυνας
τὰς ζοφώδεις ψυχάς,
παμμάκαρ Βενεδίκτη·
δώδεκα γὰρ συνέστησας
αἵνεσιν Χριστῷ
μονᾶς ἀεὶ προσάγειν
τῷ τοῦ παντὸς βασιλεῖ.

Like a sun you lit up
our darkened souls,
o Blessed Benedict;
for you established twelve
monasteries
in order to constantly offer
praise to Christ,
the King of all.

Dialogues, II, 3

Θεία σοι, μάκαρ, καθυπέταξε
Πλακιδᾶν τὸν κλεινόν
παῖδα τὸν τοῦ Τερτύλλου,
Ἐβίτζιον τὸν ἔνδοξον,
καὶ τὸν ἱερόν,
εὐδοκία, τὸν Ῥώμης
Μαῦρον, θεσπέσιε.

The divine kindliness, Blessed,
put entirely under your direction
Placidus, illustrious son of
Tertullius,
the famous Evitius,
and the priest of Rome,
Maurus, O admirable!

Dialogues, II, 3

Ἰσχύϊ μὴ φέρων τὴν
ὀλίσθησιν,
τῇ τοῦ ρείθρου φορᾷ
ἐφέρετο ὁ μείραξ·
τὸν πέτρον δὲ μιμούμενος
Μαῦρος, σαῖς εὐχαῖς
ἐφ' ὑδάτων πεζεύσας,
τοῦτον διέσωσεν.

The young adolescent was swept
by the powerful stream of the
river,
having not withstood the fall.
Imitating then Peter,
Maurus, thanks to your prayers,
walking on waters,
rescued him.

Dialogues, II, 7

Θεοτοκίον

Ἰάσθητι μοι, σῶτερ, κένωσιν
ἐνδειξάμενος γὰρ
ἐξ ἀλοχεύτου κόρης·
καὶ λῦσόν μου τὸν
σύνδεσμον
τῶν ἁμαρτιῶν,
ἵνα δόξαν προσάξω
τῇ εὐσπλαγχνίᾳ σου.

Theotokion

Have mercy on me, O Savior,
for you have made known your
emptying
(being born) from the virgin girl;
and free me from the tie
of sins,
so that I may glorify
your mercy.

Ὡδή Ε΄.

Θεοφανείας σου, Χριστέ:

Καταβαλὼν τὸν πονηρὸν
μωσαϊκῇ βακτηρίᾳ,
τὸν παῖδα
ἀκηδίας τούτου ἡλευθέρωσας·
καὶ ὑδάτων ῥεῖθρα ἐποίησας
ἀναβλῦσαι τοῖς ἀδελφοῖς,
καὶ εὐφρανθῆσθαι
τοὺς μετασχηκότας,
καὶ αἶνον εὐχαριστήριον
προσάξει Θεῷ.

Λέγειν οὐχ οἷος τέ εἰμι
τῶν σῶν, σοφέ,
θαυμασίῳ τὸ πλῆθος·
Ἐλισσαίου γάρ σοι τὸ
τεράστιον
ἐν τῷ γότθῳ πλήρες
πεποίηκας·
καὶ Φλορέντιον τὸν δεινὸν
πτωθέντα ἔκλαυσας,
παιδεύσας τὸν τοῦτο
μηνύσαντα μαθητὴν
πτώσει μὴ χαίρειν ἐχθρῶν.

Μηκέτι θέλων δυσπετεῖν,
ἀναχωρεῖς
πειρασμῶν κινδύνους μὲν
ὡς νομίζων διαφεύγειν,
ὅσιε,
ἀλλὰ πάλιν ἄλλους
ἐφεύρηκας
ἐν Κασίνῳ γὰρ ὁ δεινὸς
Ἀπόλλων ἄνωθεν
λαὸν ἐξηπάτα,
φροῦδον ἀπέδειξας.

Θεοτοκίον

Λοχεύειν ἅμα καὶ ἀγνὴν
διατηρεῖν
τὴν νηδὺν οὐ δέδεικται
γυναικῶν ἢ σὺ, θεοχαρίτωτε·
ἀλλ' ἄγγεῦναι δίδου μοι,
ἄχραντε,
καὶ ἐν σώματι καὶ ψυχῇ
ἵνα δοξάσω σε
νοὶ ἡγνισμένῳ·
ἀγνή γὰρ οὖσα, σεμνή,
ἀγγεῦναι θέλεις ἡμᾶς.

Ode 5.

Hirmos: Of your *Theophany*, O
Christ. . .

Hitting as if
with Moses' stick
the unhappy adolescent
you freed him from his *akedia*.
And you made a water source
gush forth
to delight your brothers
and you have gladdened
those who share in it,
so that they offer to God
a song of thanksgiving.

Dialogues, II, 4
Dialogues, II, 5

I am not able,
O Wise man, to relate
the multitude of your wonders,
for Eliseus' miracle, you
accomplished it
perfectly yourself, for the Goth.
You you mourned over
the terrible Florentius,
fallen dead,
and you taught
the disciple who brought you the
report
not to gloat over the enemies' death.

Dialogues, II, 6
Dialogues, II, 8

No longer wishing to run
other risks,
you withdrew into the desert,
thinking you could escape the
dangers
of temptations, O Holy,
but again you found others,
for, from the summit of Cassino,
the terrible Apollo cheated the
people
And you, throwing him down,
you showed he had vanished.

Dialogues, II, 8
Dialogues, II, 8

Theotokion

Never it had been seen, if not in you
O full of divine grace,
that the womb of a woman could
give birth
and at the same time remain virgin;
But make me pure, O you who
are unstained,
both in body and soul
so that I may glorify you
with a pure mind,
for being pure, O Holy,
you want us to be pure.

(Continued)

Ὡδή ΣΤ´.

Συνεσχέθη· ἀλλ' οὐ:

Νέος ἄλλος
Νεοκαισαρείας,
πάτερ, Γρηγόριος ἡμῖν
ἀναφανείς ἐν λόγῳ,
λίθον μέγαν
ἐκκυλίσας, θαῦμα
τοῖς μαθηταῖς σου
ἐναποδεικνύμενος·
καὶ ἀκήκοας τοῦ διαβόλου
ἀναφωνοῦντός σοι·
Τί ἐμοί τε καὶ σοί;
παῦσαι τοῦ λοιποῦ
καταδιώκων με.

Ξένα ὄντως,
ξένα καὶ μεγάλα,
πάτερ, τὰ σημεῖα τὰ σά·
καὶ γὰρ πυρῶδη φλόγα
φαινομένην ἐν τῷ μαγειρείῳ
ἐωραμένην
προσευχῇ ἠφάντωσας·
κρημνισθέντα νεανίαν πάλιν
καὶ θνήσκειν μέλλοντα
ἡγείρας ὑγιῇ,
πέμψας ὑπουργεῖν
καθὰ καὶ πρότερον.

Οἱ τὸν νόμον
τὸν δεδωρημένον
σοῦ μὴ συντηρήσαντες,
προφητικῇ ὁράσει
διελέγχονται τὸ ποτηρίων
ποσὸν μαθόντες,
ὁ κακῶς πεπώκασιν·
καὶ τὸν Τότῆλα τὸν βασιλέα
πειράζειν μέλλοντα
ἡλεγκῆς προφανῶς,
πᾶσι προειπὼν ἐν οἷς
ἐμπέση κακοῖς.

Θεοτοκίον

Ὅλος κεῖμαι
βεβορβορωμένος,
ὅλος τετραματίσμαι νῦν
πάθεσι ψυχοφθόροις,
παναγία Θεοτόκε κόρη,
ἀμαρτανόντων
πάντων τὸ προσφύγιον·
πλυνόν με, παναγνε,
κρουνοῖς δακρύων,

Ode 6.

[Hirmos]: He was seized but not. . .

Like another new
Gregory
of Neocaesarea, O Father,
You appeared to us. With a word,
You made roll
an enormous stone,
showing a clear wonder
to your disciples.
And you heard the devil
who shouted at you:
“What I have to do with thee?
Stop persecuting me in future!”

Dialogues, II, 9

Really extraordinary
extraordinary and great
O Father, are your wonders
For, actually, the blazing fire
apparently raised in the kitchen
you have it disappeared
by your prayer.
To the young man who fell (from
a wall)
and already dying, you gave life
again
(making him) perfectly healthy,
and you sent him to work as
before.

Dialogues II 10

Dialogues II 11

Those who did not observe
the rule you bestowed upon them
became convinced of their faults
by the prophetic vision,
when they discovered
how many cups
they were guilty of having drunk.
You openly blamed King Totila
who was about to put you to the test
and you announced in advance
all the misfortunes he would fall
in.

Dialogues II 12

*Dialogues II, 14
and 15*

Theotokion

I am all
in the mire
and now entirely hurt
by the passions that kill the soul.
Most holy Mother of God and
Virgin,
you are the haven
of all sinners.
Cleanse me, O All Pure, by a flow
of tears,

καὶ ἀποκάθαρον
σώματι καὶ ψυχῇ,
Ὅπως καθαρῶς αἰεὶ
δοξάζω σε.

and make me pure myself
in body and soul
so that I may always glorify you
purely.

**Κοντάκιον. Φέρον
ἀκροστιχίδα**

Kontakion with akrostich

Ὡδὴ. Ἦχος β'. Πρὸς· Τὰ ἄνω
ζητῶν.
Ἐκ βρέφους θεῷ,
παμμακάαρ,
προσκολλώμενος,
δοχεῖον τερπνὸν
τοῦ πνεύματος γεγένησαι,
δι' αὐτοῦ ὡς ἥλιος
τῇ τοῦ βίου λάμπων
φαιδρότητι,
καὶ θαυμάτων πέμπων
αὐγάς:
πρεσβεύων ἀπαύστως
ὑπὲρ πάντων ἡμῶν.

Ichos 2 to: "The one who seeks
the things above."
Firmly attached to God
O Blessed, since your childhood,
you became a receptacle
of the Spirit, pleasing to him,
and so you are like the sun
shining the light of your life,
and dispensing the radiant rays of
your miracles:
Pray incessantly
for all of us.

Οἱ οἶκοι, πρὸς· Τράνωσόν μου:

Ichoi to the tune: "Light . . ."

Ὡ βασιλεῦ θεὲ παντοκράτορ,
χορηγὲ τῆς σοφίας,
ἀγαθὸν ὁ δοτὴρ,
παράκλητε, παντοδύναμε,
φώτισον, δέομαι, τὴν ψυχὴν
μου,
καὶ τὴν γλῶττάν μου
τράνωσον, καὶ τὸ στόμα
πλάτυνον δὴ,
καὶ πληρώσας αὐτό, ὡς
Δαβὶδ ἐκβοᾷ,
αἰνέσεως καὶ σοφίας,
Βενεδίκτον ἀξίωσον σήμερον
τὸν σὸν ὑμῆσαι θεράποντα·
σὺν ἀγγέλοις αἰεὶ γὰρ δοξάζει σε:
πρεσβεύων ἀπαύστως
ὑπὲρ πάντων ἡμῶν.

O King, God *Pantokrator*,
Choregos of wisdom,
Dispenser of all goods,
Paraklitos, All-Mighty,
Enlighten my soul, I implore You;
Give clearness to my tongue now
and open my mouth
and fill it, as David shouted,
with praise and wisdom,
and make it worthy to sing today
a hymn of praise to Benedict,
Your servant,
for he glorifies you for ever with
the angels.
May he pray incessantly
for us all.

Δύναμις θεία τοῦ
παρακλήτου
τὴν καρδίαν σου, μάκαρ,
καθαρὰν ἐκ παθῶν
εὐροῦσα, ἐν σοὶ ἐσκήνωσε.²
καὶ αὐτουργὸν σε πολλῶν
θαυμάτων,
καὶ φωστῆρα δεικνύει τῶν ἐν
τῇ σκότει·
ἐνθεν σαφῶς
ἐξεγείρεις νεκρούς, καὶ
προβλέπεις τρανῶς

The divine power of the
Paraklitos,
O Blessed, finding your heart
cleansed of all passions,
took up residence in you,
and he shows that you
accomplished many miracles
and that you are the light of those
who are in darkness.
That is why, clearly,
you have woken up the dead
and, as a prophet, you have
foretold the future.

τὰ μέλλοντα ὡς προφήτης·
μοναστῶν δὲ κανόνας
ἐκθέμενος,
ἄλλος ἐδείχθη Βασιλείος·
μεθ' οὗ χαίρων, Χριστῷ νῦν
παρίστασαι:
πρεσβεύων ἀπαύστως
ὑπὲρ πάντων ἡμῶν>.

Ἦλιος ὥσπερ, πάτερ, τῇ δύσει
ἀνατείλας, φωτίζεις
ἀρετῶν τῷ φωτὶ
τῆς οἰκουμένης τὰ πέρατα.
Ῥώμῃ τῷ βίῳ σου
ἐγκαυχᾶται,
ἡ Νουρσία τὰ σπάργανα
μεγαλύνει,
πᾶσα ὁμοῦ Καμπανία κροτεῖ,
Ἰταλία σκιρτᾷ·
τὸ τοῦ Κασίνου δὲ ὄρος
πλέον πάντων κομπάζει καὶ
γῆθεται
τῷ τάφῳ ἐναβρυνόμενον·
μεθ' οὗ σκέπε ἡμᾶς τοὺς
ὑμνοῦντάς σε:
πρεσβεύων ἀπαύστως
ὑπὲρ πάντων ἡμῶν.

Ὕδῃ Ζ΄.

Ἄφραστον θαῦμα:

Πολλή σου, πάτερ,
τῶν τεραστίων ἡ δύναμις·
ὑπερβαίνει
λόγον γὰρ τὰ σὰ
λαλεῖν ἢ νοεῖν
θεῖα προτερήματα.
πνεῦμα τὸ θεῖον
οἰκῆσαν τῇ ψυχῇ σου
χαρισμάτων πολλῶν
ἐνέπλησέ σε.

Ῥώμης ὁ μέγας
γρηγόριος ὁ διάλογος
πρὸς τρις δέκα
θαύματα καὶ ἕξ
συγγράμματος σοφῶς,
ἔδειξε τῷ κόσμῳ σε
ἥλιον ἄλλον
φωτίζοντα τὴν κτίσιν,
Βενεδίκτε σοφέ,
Λατίνων κλέος.

Having laid out the *kanon* for
monks,
You appeared like another Basil,
Rejoicing with him, you are now
beside Christ,
praying incessantly
for us all.

Like the sun, O Father, for the
West,
You sprung up, illuminating
with the light of your virtues,
the edge of the *oikoumene*.
Rome glorifies herself of your life,
Nursia chants your childhood
and the whole Campania
applauds.

May Italy dance with joy, may the
Mount Cassino,
more than any other, tell
numerous discourses and rejoice
exalting for (having) his tomb.
With whom may you protect us,
who are chanting you
Praying incessantly
for us all.

Ode 7.

[Hirmos]: O ineffable wonder! . . .

O Father, immense
is the power of your miracles,
it surpasses
indeed the word
in speaking and understanding
your divine privileges.
The divine Spirit
settled in your soul
filling it
with numerous charisms.

Gregory the Great
of Rome, the *Dialogos*,
wrote wisely a narration
of thirty-six miracles,
he revealed you
to the world
like another sun,
illuminating the Creation,
O Benedict the wise
glory of the Latin people.

Σὺ, πάτερ, θεῖον
νόμον ἡμῖν καταλέλοιπας
ὁδηγίαν
πᾶσαν μοναχῶν,
καὶ κλήσιν αὐτῷ
ῥέγουλαν ἐπέθηκας·
ἐν ᾧ στοιχοῦντες
βοῶμεν τῷ Σωτῆρι·
Λυτρωτὰ ὁ θεὸς
εὐλογητὸς εἶ.

Θεοτοκίον

Ὑπὸ τῆς ἁγαν
ἀναισθησίας κρατούμενος
οὐ γινώσκω
τὰ κατ' ἐμαυτόν·
βαρὺς γὰρ ἐμοὶ
λίθος ἐπικάθηται·
ἀλλὰ μοι χεῖρα
ἐπίδος, θεοτόκε,
καὶ ἐκ τάφου παθῶν
ἀνάστησόν με.

Ὁδὴ Η'.

Ἐκστηθι φρίττων:

Τίς οὐ δοξάσει σε, σοφέ;
τίς οὐχ ὑμνήσει σε;
τὸν δοξάσαντα θεόν,
καὶ δόξαν
εὐρόντα οὐράνιον,
καὶ δοξαζόμενον
ὑπὸ τε ἀγγέλων καὶ
ἀνθρώπων
ὑμνούντων καὶ βοώντων·
Ἱερεῖς, εὐλογεῖτε
καὶ ὑπερυψοῦτε
αὐτὸν εἰς τοὺς <αἰῶνας>.

Ὑψει ἀνῆλθες ἀρετῶν,
θεομακάριστε,
ὥς τις ἄλλος Μωϋσῆς·
καὶ νόμον
ἐκ θεοῦ διέγραψας,
οὐχὶ δεκάλογον,
ἀλλ' ἐν ἐβδομήκοντα καὶ δύο
τοῖς τίτλοις ἡρμοσμένον·
ὃν ἐκ πόθου κρατοῦντες
οἱ ἐν τῷ Κασίνῳ
ὑμνοῦσί σε πατέρες.

You left us, O Father,
a divine **norm**
perfect guide
for monks
and you called it:
Regula.
Following it
We cry to the Savior:
O God, our Redeemer,
You are blessed!³

Theotokion

I am entirely overpowered
for too much insensibility
and I do not know
what concerns myself,
for a heavy
stone lays on me,
But give your hand,
O Mother of God,
and from the tomb of the
passions, raise me up.

Ode 8.

[Hirmos]: Be seized by
astonishment and shake. . .

Who would not glorify you, O
Wise,
Who would not praise you,
O you who glorified God
and obtained
the celestial glory
and are glorified
by the angels and the men
who sing and cry out:
“Priests, bless him
and exalt him
For ever and ever!”

You went to the summit of the
virtues,
O divinely blessed,
like another Moses;
and you wrote a **law**,
coming from God,
not a Decalogue
But composed of seventy-two
chapters altogether,
which the fathers at Cassino
wholeheartedly observe
when they chant you hymns.

Dialogues II, 36

Dialogues II, 36

(Continued)

Φέγγει τῶν θείων σου εὐχῶν
τὸ σκότος διώξον
τῆς ἀθλίας μου ψυχῆς,
καὶ λάμψον
ἐν τῇ διανοίᾳ μου
φῶς τὸ τρισήλιον,
ὦ πάτερ Βενεδίκτη, καὶ πᾶσι
τοῖς ἐν τῷ θείῳ οἴκῳ
σοῦ σεπτῶς ἀνυμνοῦσι
καὶ δοξολογοῦσι
Χριστὸν εἰς τοὺς αἰῶνας.

By the luminous brightness of
your divine prayers, dispel the
darkness
of my soul overcome by the fights,
and let the light with the three
Suns shine into my mind,
O Father Benedict, and so into all
of those
who, in your divine abode,
chant reverently
and glorify
Christ for ever.

Θεοτοκίον

Ὡ τίς θρηνήσει τὴν ἐμήν,
ἀγνή, ἀπώλειαν
ἐξ ὧν ἤμαρτον ἐκῶν,
καὶ ἔτι
ἀμαρτῶν οὐ παύομαι
ὁ ἄσυνειδητος,
κακίστη συνηθείᾳ δουλεύων!
Ἢ τοῦ θεοῦ μου μήτηρ
προκατάλαβε, σῶσον,
ἵνα σε δοξάζω
ὁ σὸς ἀχρεῖος δοῦλος.

Theotokion

O (All) Pure, who will
mourn my ruin?
I have sinned of my own will since
I exist,
and still
I cannot stop sinning,
a man without conscience,
I am the slave of very bad habits!
Mother of my God,
stop me and save me
so that I glorify you, me,
your unworthy servant⁴!

Ὕδῃ Θ'.

Μὴ ἐποδύρου μου, μήτηρ:

Ode 9.

[Hirmos]: Do not bemoan on me,
O Mother. . .

Χοροῖς συνήφθης ἀγγέλων
μετὰ θάνατον, μάκαρ,
ἐπὶ τῆς γῆς ἀγγελικὴν
ἀνύσας βιωτήν·
καὶ ψυχὴν γερμανοῦ
καὶ τῆς συναίμονος
κατιδεῖν ἀξιώθης
εἰσέτι περιών,
καὶ πρεσβεύεις σωθῆναι
τοὺς σὲ δοξάζοντας.

You were united to the angels'
choir
after your death, O Blessed,
you had till the end, on earth, an
angelic life.
And while still living
you were made worthy of seeing
Germanus' soul
and that of your sister.
Pray that those who glorify you
will be saved.

*Dialogues II, 35
and 34*

Ψυχὴν καὶ σῶμα Κυρίῳ
ὥς δεκτὸν ἱερεῖον
ὀλοκαυτώσας, καὶ φωτίσας
σου τὸν νοῦν,
τῇ Τριάδι λαμπρῶς
καὶ νῦν παρίστασαι,
ἱκετεύων διόλου
σωθῆναι τοὺς τὴν σὴν,
Βενεδίκτη, ὑμνοῦντας
μνήμην, μακάρε.

You offered as a burnt offering to
the Lord
your soul and your body,
like a pleasing victim; and you
illuminated your mind
in front of the shining Trinity
and now you stand in the glory,
Imploring constantly,
that those who celebrate
your memory, O Benedict,
will be saved, O Blessed.

Ὡσπερ ἀστήρ ἑωσφόρος
ἐν τῇ δύσει ἀστράψας,
τάς τῶν πιστῶν,
θαυματουργέ, ἐφώτισας
ψυχάς,
προορῶν καὶ τρανῶν
τὰ ἐπερχόμενα·
καὶ λιπὼν τὴν τοῦ τέλους
ἐδήλωσας, σοφέ,
πεφθακυῖάν σοι ὥραν,
καὶ νῦν οἰκεῖς οὐρανοῦς.

Like the morning star,
that sparkles in the West,
you illuminated the souls of the
believers,
O Thaumaturgist,
forseeing and enlightening the
future events.
Thus, as you were about to leave
this life,
you taught, O Wise,
the end of your time which
became closer for you,
and now you inhabit the Heavens.

Dialogues II, 37

Τριαδικόν

Δόξα πατρί προανάρχῳ
καὶ Υἱῷ συνανάρχῳ,
καὶ δόξα πνεύματι τῷ θεῷ καὶ
Θεῷ·
τριλαμπεῖ γὰρ μονάς,
καὶ ἐν μονάδι τριάς,
ὡς γρηγόριος ἔφη
ὁ μέγας καὶ πολὺς·
οὐ ταῖς θεαῖς πρεσβεΐαις
σῶσον ἡμᾶς, ὁ Θεός.

Triadikon (Dixastikon)

Glory to the Father who is from
all eternity
and to the Son coeternal with Him
And glory to the divine Spirit
equally God
for the unity shines in a triple
brightness
and in the unity the Trinity,
as Gregory
the Great and most worthy said.⁵
By his divine prayers,
Save us, O God!

Θεοτοκίον

Ἡ τῶν βροτῶν σωτηρία,
ὁ λιμὴν τῶν ἐν ζάλῃ.
ἡ κραταῖα χριστιανῶν
ἀντίληψις, αἰεὶ
βοηθός μοι γενοῦ
ἐν ὥρᾳ κρίσεως,
κατακρίσεως ἔργα
ὡς ἔχοντι πολλὰ·
ἐπὶ σοὶ τὴν ἐλπίδα
καὶ γὰρ ἀνέθηκα.

Theotokion

Safety of the mortals
Haven for those who are in the
tempest,
powerful help of the Christians,
always defend me
at the hour of judgement;
because I have many actions
which deserve a sentence
and because in you
I have put my hope.

Notes

- 1 About this expression, Gregory the Great inserts a long explanation within a dialogue between Peter, his disciple, and himself, concerning the story of the poison attempt, when Benedict decided to leave the bad brothers. The extract begins as follows: *Tunc ad locum dilectae solitudinis reddit, et solus in superno spectatoris oculis habitavit secum. PETRUS: Minus patenter intellego quidnam sit: habitavit secum . . .* (*Dialogues II*, Chapter 3, 5, Grégoire le Grand 1978–1980, vol. 2, 142 ff.). In Zacharias's Greek version there is an important amplification with respect to the Latin original text, where, in particular, the the concept of *hesychia* is added: Τότε μετὰ πάσης προθυμίας ὁ ἅγιος τὸν τόπον κατέλαβεν ἔνθα τὸ πρὶν κατόκει, τὴν ἀρχῆθεν αὐτῷ φίλην ἡσυχίαν ἀσπαζόμενος, καὶ ὑπὸ τοῦ ἐν ὑψηλοῖς κατοικοῦντος καὶ τὰ ταπεινὰ ἐφορῶντος Θεοῦ

μόνου φρουρούμενος καὶ ἑαυτῷ προσέχων, κατόκησεν μεθ' ἑαυτοῦ. ΠΙΕΤΡΟΣ. Ὀλίγον, θεωρήμων δέσποτα, ἀσαφὲς καθέστηκεν μοι τὸ εἰρημένον· τί γάρ ἐστιν τὸ Κατόκησεν μεθ' ἑαυτοῦ; (Gregorio Magno 2001, 22 ff.). This theme had a rich posterity in monastic spirituality, as proved by Neilos's hymns and other medieval testimonies (cf. *supra* note 50).

- 2 See the famous verse 14 of the prologue to John's Gospel: Καὶ ὁ λόγος σὰρξ ἐγένετο καὶ ἐσκήνωσεν ἐν ἡμῖν; and the Word beame flesh, and He took residence (lit.: He pitched His tent) among us.
- 3 Let us notice the word play: Benedict = *benedictus* = εὐλογητὸς = blessed.
- 4 This expression, "unworthy servant," is found in the conclusion to one of Jesus's parables in Luke 17, 5–10: "So you also, when you have done everything you were told to do, should say, 'We are unworthy servants; we have only done our duty.'" (οὕτως καὶ ὑμεῖς, ὅταν ποιήσητε πάντα τὰ διαταχθέντα ὑμῖν, λέγετε ὅτι δοῦλοι ἀχρεῖοί ἐσμεν, ὃ ὀφείλομεν ποιῆσαι πεποιήκαμεν).
- 5 Gregory of Nazianzen. See *supra* n. 83.

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15 Neilos's long-lasting marks on Grottaferrata's identity

Ines Angeli Murzaku

The *bios* of Neilos as historical source

The *Bioi* of the Italo-Greek monks are an indispensable primary source for whoever wants to study the somewhat obscure history of Southern Italy. The *Bioi* are a precious testimony to the persons, places, local customs, struggles of daily life, and the quite unique ascetic practices and discipline followed by the Italo-Greek monks. In Southern Italy, similar to Byzantine society elsewhere, the monastics held multiple roles in society, as spiritual guides, travelers and models to be emulated by the locals. The impact of the monastics was particularly strong among the rural population of Mezzogiorno and, in the case of the *Bios* of St Neilos, even beyond. If the Byzantine officials were incapable of communicating to the peoples of the Occident the elements of the Greek civilization, which they represented, the Italo-Greek monks, because of their considerable numbers, culture and influence on the people, both cultural and economic, raised awareness and appreciation in the West of Byzantine civilization, thus performing an invaluable service to Christendom. St Neilos is a classic as well as one of the most celebrated representatives of this regiment of Italo-Greek monastics. Byzantine monasticism in Southern Italy became the principal and probably unique vehicle of Byzantine civilization, which was in continual evolution, until it contributed to the splendor of Italian Humanism and the Renaissance. It was the monks who helped to form the rural people of Southern Italy in the ideals of Byzantine culture, giving them a sense of belonging,¹ so the monk and the rural society made one whole.

One aspect of monastic sanctity, which is quite characteristic of Italo-Greek monasticism, is the monk-traveler and his first-hand experiences with people and places as seen in the *bios* of St Neilos. The motives for monastic travels varied, and the traveling Italo-Greek saint presented a triple-function from his holiness to the people and places he visited. He was at once the holy healer, the holy judge, and the holy prophet. When he traveled to other monasteries as was the case of St Neilos in Montecassino and other monasteries, the Italo-Greek monk was the holy

theologian, who meticulously explained and compared theological dogmas. Scholars agree that the *bios* of Neilos the Younger, which throws light on the history of pre-Norman Southern Italy, is the masterpiece of Italo-Greek hagiographic literature. In comparison to the *bioi* of other Italo-Greek saints who were born and active in Southern Italy and Sicily, as for example the Life of St Elias the Younger of Enna in Sicily and St Elias the Speleot, St Sabas the Younger, Sts Christopher and Makarios and others, the life of Neilos the Younger is not only documented in the hagiographic text of the *bios* and the religious hymns dedicated to the saintly monk, but can be traced independently in other sources as well.² Moreover, the year of Neilos's death is documented in a Grottaferrata inscription which indicates the year 6513 (1004) according to the Byzantine calculation³ and sequentially the names of the first twelve abbots of Grottaferrata, including that of the then current Abbot Nicholas II.⁴ Correspondingly, the *bios* of St Neilos indicates accurately the date of Neilos's death on the feast day of St John the Evangelist, known as St John the Theologian in the Orthodox tradition. Neilos died after the vespers in anticipation of the feast St John the Evangelist at the dawn on 25 September 1004. His feast day is celebrated on 26 September, commemorating the anniversary of his *dies natalis* or birthday into eternal life in Christ.

Other sources include the tenth-century *bios* of St Phantinos. There are chronological links between the *bios* of St Phantinos and that of Neilos. The ascetics met in the region of Merkourion, and the date of their encounter according to Erica Follieri is 939, when Neilos was in his 30s and Phantinos had concluded his monastic "probation" and had begun the monastic establishments of Merkourion to which the *bios* of St Phantinos (chapter 17 and 18) make specific reference.⁵ The *bios* of St Bartholomew the Younger also refers to St Neilos and the reputation the saint has left behind for all of those who are "lovers of virtue."⁶ St Neilos is also mentioned in the Chronicle of Montecassino and the *Vita* of St Adalbert bishop of Prague. This testifies to the historicity of the person named Neilos and the accuracy of factual information presented in the *bios* which is still within the hagiographic genre.

According to the tradition of Grottaferrata and Fr. Germano Giovanelli's authoritative translation from the Greek original, the *bios* of St Neilos was written by St Bartholomew, known as St Bartholomew of Grottaferrata, third successor of St Neilos as abbot. Other scholars disagree and still there is no definite consensus on the authorship of the *bios*. Nonetheless, there is agreement that whoever the biographer of the *bios* of Neilos might have been, the author proves to be an ingenious eyewitness of the events that he promised to narrate and a faithful disciple of the saint. He was a monastic that was close to the saint, and was an individual who had practiced the teaching of his spiritual father and maestro. Neilos's *bios* is more than a medieval hagiographic narrative or a spiritual journey or the biography of a saint representing an ἄθροισμα – total of Christian

ideals to be emulated. It represents compelling factual details about the peculiarity of Italo-Greek monastic life with its distinctiveness in accommodating both solitary and community lifestyles within the same monastic community, a syncretism which Neilos himself practiced. It portrays the religious spirit, teachings and struggles of St Neilos, and provides remarkable details about the culture, historical events, historical players, geography, religious figures and political personalities of tenth-century Southern Italy. In it one can find a depiction of the Greek, Lombard, German, Saracen and the common people with their everyday lives and daily worries: individuals like the thief, the peasant, the disciple, the prince, the emperor, the abbot, the widow and many other individuals, who made up the backbone of pre-Norman southern Italy. The *Bios* is a representation of old Calabria at its best.

Moreover, the representation of “the other” does not escape the attention of the author of Neilos’s *bios* either. Here the scholar and student of Byzantium or the medievalist can find the presence of Jewish community in Calabria. In fact, the *bios* of St Neilos is believed to be the only narrative of the pre-Norman period to provide evidence about Jewish communities in the region. The *bios* indicates that the Jews were not only merchants who happened to be in the region for trade-related activities but they were part of a Jewish-Byzantine epoch of Southern Italy. In fact, Shabbetai Donnolo, a renowned Jewish astronomer, medical doctor, mystic and philosopher, who was born in Terra d’Otranto, was St Neilos’s intimate friend. Additionally, the *Bios* testifies to the historically verifiable presence of other ethnic groups including Bulgarians, Franks, Egyptians and Armenians, who were part of the Southern Italian historical mosaic. For example, it is possible that after the capture of the Bulgarian kingdom by Emperor Basil II, a certain number of Bulgarian immigrants were settled in Southern Italy. The presence of Franks in Calabria is dated from the Carolingian period and later in 968–969 when Otto I invaded the Byzantine Themes of Southern Italy. French troops would have been stationed in the region probably until the final defeat of Otto II in Stilo in 982. Due to Nikephoros Phokas’s re-conquering of Southern Italy, Armenian soldiers were settled in Calabria, as well, to which the *bios* of St Neilos testifies.

Thus, the *bios* of St Neilos is a compendium of the southern Italian history, culture and societal mores of tenth-century Italy. Furthermore, St Neilos, in comparison to other Italo-Greek monks, represents the scholarly, learned and highly sophisticated Southern-Italian monk. The *bios* informs the reader that St Neilos responded with ease to the Benedictines’s questions in the Roman-Latin tongue, which testifies to the intellectuality of St Neilos and to the multilayered traditions and cultures of Calabria to which St Neilos was exposed. Moreover, St Neilos had read and appropriated the thinking of the Latin fathers beside that of the Greek fathers; knowing Latin and being most knowledgeable of the

available literature, including the Life of St Benedict, facilitated the many contacts and exchanges that the saint and his brethren encountered en route to *terra Latina*.

As for the style, St Neilos's *bios* offers a variety of styles to the reader: high, middle and low style if one uses the workable paradigm developed by Ihor Ševčenko for the analyses of Byzantine texts.⁷ High style confers a high status on the subject discussed. In contrast, low and middle style have the advantage of being understood by a much wider audience. Moreover, the hagiographer has a good sense of language and uses a style that ranges from common to poetic and sublime within the same paragraph. The language is factually informative besides being performative⁸ or emulative, which is typical of hagiographic discourse. The χρησιμότητα-usefulness of the teaching to be emulated is centered on St Neilos, who is ranked above others in sanctity and virtue, and who is especially selected for his humanly possible-emulative qualities. This motivational χρησιμότητα is addressed to all those disciples or lay people who are ready to take the challenge of spiritual perfection. At times the *bios* follows a syntax that is based on classical norms, but at other times the author is very innovative and makes good use of highly elevated colloquial expressions. He seems to try to equate his mode of expression to the theme under investigation. For example, he narrates miracles in a very pedestrian style, but uses a more exalted style for theological, liturgical or moral doctrinal expressions. Furthermore, the author of the *bios* is quite good at using irony and sarcasm. Thus, the author invites and tries to offer something to audiences of multiple tastes and intellectual levels. He satisfies the peasant, the traveler, the theologically motivated, and obviously the monastic community or communities where the saint traveled or lived either en-route or for extended periods of time.

Instabilitas loci characterized Neilos's pilgrimage, but this by no means was an *instabilitas loci vel propositi*. The *instabilitas* is explained on one level by the lack of a definite structure of Italo-Greek monasticism and on another level by the continual precarious conditions related to Saracen attacks on Calabria during the tenth century. However, it is the case that even when offered stable religious houses and the possibility of settling in safe territories including Campagna and in Lazio, Neilos refused to rest. This does not mean that Neilos and his monks were *gyrovagues* scorned in Benedict's Rule, nor slaves to their own wills and the allurements of gluttony. Neilos was not looking for a better community or a holier abbot. His community was with him in a communal pilgrimage. Moreover, Neilos's monks did not disturb their brother monks who granted them hospitality and who never used the hardship of their travels as an excuse to gain hospitality. It is important to note here that Benedict was critical of the abuse of hospitality including the hospitality granted to monks-pilgrims, which remains an important facet of modern monasticism.

Italo-Greek monasticism's traditionalism was a crucial force behind the re-vitalization process of the *Greekness* of Southern Italy. The Sicilian monks who fled to Calabria found themselves in customary settings and within the same Eastern-Byzantine ecclesiastical structures and part of the provinces of the Byzantine Empire, albeit on the empire's fringes. If until then Greek monasticism in Calabria can be characterized as intermittent and structurally fluid, the re-enforcements from Sicily contributed to communal-structured life, or to more stability which laid the structural foundation of the coenobium. However, this structure remained open and accommodative to the individual rhythm of the hermits, and to a natural evolution from hermitic to coenobitic lifestyle – or to the synchronicity of both monastic forms within the same monastery. In Calabria, the progression to an organized coenobitic monastic life or the evolution from anti-structured monasticism to structured monasticism came about quite naturally, without any trauma, as the need for communitarian expression grew due to membership numbers in the monastic communities as well as the continuous precariousness of the region and attacks from foreigners. However, the supreme ideal of the Italo-Greek monk was *ἡσυχία* – *hesychia*, contemplation in silence, *fuga mundi* and total submission to the guidance of the spiritual director. Agostino Pertusi's argument that "only very slowly the Italo-Greek monk, and especially Calabrian monk, resigned to a coenobitical lifestyle regulated in almost every particular, including living and prayer" is valid and amply supported by Italo-Greek hagiographic literature.

St Neilos as the homo peregrinus

Chapter 98 of the *bios* of St Neilos deals with the last testimony of the saint to his brethren, to people who were in the process of pilgrimage and to all those who would read the *bios*, from the Greek monastery of St Agatha in Tuscolo, in the vicinity of Grottaferrata, where Neilos and his community were in *peregrinatio*. The historical and devout *homo peregrinus* had some special requests now that his life as a *peregrinus* was coming to a final rest. It is important to note the hagiographer's carefulness in word choice. The saint refers to himself as *peregrines*, thus viewing his life as nothing but a long *peregrinatio*, concepts which are fundamental to medieval spirituality. It is a significant and captivating pronouncement coming from a "temporary resident" of the world living in transitory surroundings.⁹ The concept of life as a pilgrimage, to which Neilos refers, is featured strongly in the Old Testament, New Testament and the patristic writings with which the saint, according to his *bios*, was very familiar. The book of Genesis states that Abraham was called to leave his home and go out in search of another land, a land that God had promised him, which was not necessarily holy although chosen by God. The Lord said to Abram: "Go forth from the land of your kinsfolk and from your father's house to a land that I will show you" (Gen. 12:1).

Neilos's life, like that of Abraham, was that of a sojourner. He was constantly on the move, in search of a hospitable land to settle. Abraham moved from place to place to pasture his flocks. Comparably, Neilos and his Calabrian monks were in constant motion, between Southern and Central Italy, and their final trajectory was north-bound, to Rome as their final destination. Abraham's semi-nomadic life style is the life of a sojourner identifiable with the Hebrew *gur*, which in the New Testament is translated as a resident alien or a foreigner who lives in a country not his own.¹⁰ This was similar to Neilos, who responding to the Latin monks of Montecassino identified himself as a resident alien celebrating the office in the Greek language. In fact, as the Βίος informs, Neilos was never shy about revealing his Greek-foreignness, given he and his monks felt accepted enough to state freely their different identity. The covenant of the Lord with Abraham was the Promised Land, which according to Gen. 15:18 "will stretch from the Wadi of Egypt to the Great River (the Euphrates)," which included the promise "I will give to you and to your descendants after you the land in which you are now staying" (Gen. 17:8). Thusly, the descendants of Abraham would one day colonize the same land that Abraham resided in as a foreigner. Obviously, Abraham never received the fulfillment of the covenant promise that he would possess the land; Moses was not allowed to enter the Promised Land either, and St Neilos never resided in his land-monastery. The Old Testament hope of an ultimate and permanent settlement in the land, accompanied by peace, remains in view: "My people shall live in peaceful dwelling places, in secure homes, in undisturbed places of rest" (Is. 32:18). This is similar to what Neilos wished for his monks and his establishment in the land-monastery of Grottaferrata that he had particularly chosen for his monks which was in *terra Latina*, overlooking Rome, in which Grottaferrata's founder felt a sense of belonging although he had never lived in the new establishment. Grottaferrata became home for the uprooted monks and the final peaceful resting home for Neilos. The assumption of a home-place-*terra* is a notion that only the homeless fully appreciate and comprehend, and this was the case of Neilos and his community who made Grottaferrata their *stabulum* without abandoning the principle of *peregrinatio*. St Benedict's ideal of stabilization is nothing other than the interiorization of *peregrination* or *peregrination in stabilitate*, a self-exile from the world in the monastery.¹¹

Genesis is particularly helpful in unpacking Neilos's final pronouncements to his monks. The next wish of Neilos the pilgrim was that his brethren guarantee that his final wishes for his place of burial be fulfilled. Neilos's testament resembles that of the dying 147-year-old Jacob, who died a stranger in the land of Egypt (Gen. 49:29–33), and requested that his sons responsibly obey his last commands and bury him in Canaan, in the burial place of his fathers. Indeed, Canaan was the place of his belonging, and he wanted his people to keep their hearts attached to Canaan, the Promised Land. Here is the dying man's request: "Take me

back and bury me with my relatives. He knew exactly where he belonged. He wanted to be buried in the land with Abraham, Sarah, Isaac, Rebekah and Leah in the cave he bought from the local Canaanite down near Hebron. He was expecting reunion with those who had preceded him in death and had exercised faith in God. Moreover, Jacob wanted what he said to all of his sons to be remembered and repeated to the members of their families for generations to come. And as time would pass his sons would be able to more fully understand and appreciate their father's last wishes. As did Jacob, Neilos blessed his spiritual sons, and with them he blessed his new foundation – the Monastery of Grottaferrata, which according to an old tradition going back at least to the fifteenth century, was built on what is believed to be the Villa Tusculum of Cicero¹² where he wrote the *Disputationes Tusculanae* and other works. More importantly, Neilos, similar to Jacob, knew the place of his burial. He wanted to be buried in Grottaferrata, in the vicinity of Rome and the tombs of the apostles Peter and Paul that Neilos, similar to other Italo-Greek monks, had visited regularly. Rome was the place of his belonging, where Neilos's heart was, and he wanted his followers to keep their hearts attached to Rome, the Promised Land.

There is abundant evidence for the importance of proper burial in the Old Testament, and this is evidenced by the frequency with which the Holy Scripture refers to the fear of being left unburied. Thus, one of the curses for breach of the covenant is: "Your corpses will become food for all the birds of the air and for the beasts of the field, with no one to frighten them off" (Deut. 28:26). Abraham's purchase of the cave at Machpelah as a family tomb (Gen. 23) and the consequent measures taken by other patriarchs to ensure that they would be buried there (Gen. 49:29–33; 50:25–26) occupy a prominent place in the patriarchal narratives. The stage was set for Moses to lead his people out of Egypt and back into the promised land of Canaan. Likewise, Neilos made this important choice. Neilos's Promised Land was Grottaferrata on the Alban Hills (Castelli Romani),¹³ and, different from Jacob, he himself had led his monks to his chosen place by linking Grottaferrata and the destiny of the monastery to that of Rome. The burial of Jacob closes out the first book of the Old Testament and concludes a major part of the history of God's chosen people. Similarly, the Neilos period of Grottaferrata concluded with the death and burial of the saint at the place where the monastery had its beginning. The hagiographer recorded that the 95-year-old Neilos drew himself into the bed, made himself comfortable while surrounded by his brethren and went to sleep. Neilos's mission on earth was fulfilled in his *Magnum opus* – the monastery of Grottaferrata. This is how the dying man addressed his sons:

I beg of you, when I die, do not delay in burying my body in the earth, nor should you bury it in a church, nor decide to build a vault

over me, or any other such adornment whatsoever. But if you really wish to make some sign to indicate where I am buried, let it be on level ground, so that the pilgrims may rest there – for I too have been a pilgrim all the days of my life – and remember me in your holy prayers.

(Chapter 97)

There were two senses of pilgrimage embodied in Neilos's *persona*: one was the interior-mystical, and the other was the exterior-terrestrial; one was inbound and the other outbound; one was the pilgrimage of the spirit, the other was of the body; the first was of return, the other was of the end of a beginning. In the inbound pilgrimage, the soul was ascending to eternity; and in the outbound, that Neilos shared with his brethren, was a shared climbing of Alban Hills which enriched and cultivated, transformed and recreated along the way the nucleus of the first community of Grottaferrata. In fact Neilos's spiritual and terrestrial pilgrimages ended where Grottaferrata's began. The monastery, which overlooks the eternal city, signified *stabilitas loci* for Neilos's monastic community, a final resting place for Neilos, while simultaneously marking the identity of the monastic community of Grottaferrata.

Neilos's soul, similar to that of other pilgrims, was journeying. His life objective was getting closer to God. Neilos the *homo viator* embodied the medieval idea of pilgrimage of his time, which was search for transformation or re-creation of self, through the forgiveness of sins. Neilos was constantly on the move since his youth. He was *en-passe*. Neilos's was a *xeniteia* – a willful loss of one's country of birth, or what Antoine Guillaumont called *dépaysement*.¹⁴ It was his choice to be a foreigner and a stranger not an exile, following God's commandment to Abram in Genesis: "Go forth from the land of your kinsfolk and from your father's house to a land that I will show you." (Gen. 12:1) And Grottaferrata overlooking Rome was providentially picked by St Neilos as a safe-haven of what constitutes now the only remnant of the once flourishing Italo-Greek monasticism. Neilos's citizenship on earth was aiming to achieve a loftier one: citizenship in heaven (Phil. 3:20) *denique caelum*. It was an ever-moving, ascending pilgrimage towards a common resting center, working its mission of fulfillment: communion with God and others beginning home, in his own monastery. Such a rest in movement can only be affirmed in the context of teleology, an eschatological movement of the pilgrim towards the One who is calling him home.¹⁵

Neilos embarked on an inbound-outbound pilgrimage in search of something worth having. Willingly, he alienated himself from the familiar-sinful world or the prospect of prosperous life in his native Rossano, which was a requirement for the new citizenship to be rewarded, an order which required alienation from the world's deeds and total love for God's deeds. The hagiographer explains that Neilos sought discomfort

and refused to dwell in the pleasantness of transitory-familiar surroundings that would delay him from reaching the Promised Land.¹⁶ However, Neilos departed not from people, but from the sins available in the world. Thus his pilgrimage was a shared experience. Neilos the *homo peregrines*, as the *bios* explains, encountered many people in his pilgrimage, companions that he scolded and loved, straightened and forgave, fulfilling yet another commandment or requirement of love: "You shall love your neighbor as yourself," (Lev. 19:18) an Old Testament teaching that was reinforced by the New Testament, Matthew and John: "Children, let us love not in word or speech but in deed and truth." (1 Jn. 3:18) The two entwined entities of love of God and of the neighbor were part of Neilos's life's mission. The concept of love of neighbor is equal to the love of pilgrims. Neilos, the lifelong pilgrim, was thinking of other pilgrims who would be visiting Grottaferrata on his deathbed. He wanted his monastery to provide hospitality and become a place of encounter and temporary rest for the pilgrims passing through Latina road.

According to the *Bíos*, Neilos was not afraid of the change and world's challenge, to get to know and to get known in return, to help and be helped. Neilos embraced, re-created, and cultivated his pilgrim identity through his various enriching encounters he had along the way, first with his spiritual sons and brethren and then with other people. The saint met people from all walks of life in his outbound pilgrimage including Saracens, Jews, Latins, popes and antipopes, emperors, emirs, abbots, princes and princesses, but also with the common people including the thief, the peasant and the widow. Did these encounters mean that Neilos was not sufficiently alienated from the world and the world's deeds? Did this mean that he was not fulfilling the first alienation related to his monastic vows to its full potential? St Basil, whom Neilos had read since the days of his youth, probably has the answer to this question, where he discussed the establishment of the *stabilitas*-monasteries, which opened a door or was the first step to the love of neighbor beginning with the community. St Basil thought that the common dwelling of the brethren within the monastery was a contesting ground for athletes. *Prima caritas incipit a seipso*-charity begins at home with your brother: "For how will he practice the virtue of humility, if there is no one to whom he may show himself humble? How will he show pity, if he is cut off from the society of others? Or how will he show forbearance, if there is no one to oppose his wishes?"¹⁷ However, even Basil himself had found a good balance between the other-worldly asceticism and active pastoral care, which his position as bishop required.¹⁸ In fact, Basil's life is a classical example of *monasterium intra ecclesiam*.

Neilos followed St Basil's lead in the communal life shared with his brothers, although they were on the move. However, as the hagiographer informed, Neilos did not sever his connections with the world.¹⁹ In the life of Neilos there was hardly any polarization between the other-worldly

and inner-worldly asceticism,²⁰ or a division between asceticism and mysticism discussed as *polare Begriffe* or polar concepts:²¹ the mystic as passive, in contrast to the active asceticism. Neilos's asceticism according to the *bios* is a fusion of such polar ways, or better Neilos's way was a synthesis or *harmonia* of the two ways: *innerweltliche* and *ausserweltliche*, inner worldly and worldly. As his *vita* testifies, the saint was active in the world, in fact in both worlds, in the eleventh-century Latin and the Byzantine society, communicating with popes, emperors and emirs. However, caution needs to be applied when the involvement of the saint in politics is discussed. This needs to be understood more in terms of influence of the saint upon decision-making people, be these lay or religious. Moreover, Neilos's interventions were quite effective in resolving everyday situations of the common people, which were not less important. This is the social function of monastic sanctity: comforting words to a suffering community plagued by natural disasters or disease; the release of prisoners or material help offered to the village widow. Neilos was not a stranger to his brother in need and was not afraid to meet and exchange with people. More generally, such fusion of sanctity and worldliness, asceticism and mysticism was also the case of other Italo-Greek saints including St Elias the Younger and Elias the Speleot. So, although Neilos's first preference was the desert, like the John the Baptist and St Basil before him, he lived and operated within the world and exercised his influence on the world.

The Monastery of Grottaferrata – Neilos's foundation – continued its pilgrimage following in the founder's model of fusion between other-worldly and inner-worldly asceticism. Neilos's wish for Grottaferrata was to make it a point of unity for all the dispersed and wandering brethren, which included Italo-Greek monks, *peregrines* and common people. Neilos's body was laid to rest surrounded by monks, nobles and non-nobles, and by people who were grieving the loss of their saint.²² Neilos's desire for Grottaferrata was that it be a meeting place of encounter and preservation i.e., continue in Neilos's encountering enterprise and preserve and transmit what was left of the Italo-Greek monasticism. Thus, Grottaferrata, following in the founder's footsteps, re-created her identity, showing a high level of originality and adaptability while building its *stabilitas* for the monastic community at the gates of the *urbe*. Neilos's *peregrinatio* and later Grottaferrata's *peregrinatio* made the monastic community reach new levels of self-understanding and self-knowledge while showing a high level of adaptability to new conditions.

St Neilos is an exemplar of the eleventh-century medieval *peregrino* in *peregrinatio*. He embodied pilgrims's *par excellence* character traits: who never settled down (Heb. 11:9); looked forward for the city with strong foundations (Heb. 11:10); never thought of going back (Heb. 11:15) or terminating his pilgrimage; displayed a strong desire for a better homeland (Heb. 11:16); and died in faith (Heb. 11:13) that his life and vision will live in the Monastery of Mother of God of Grottaferrata.

Notes

- 1 Hester 1992, 148.
- 2 von Falkenhausen 2009, 87.
- 3 A.M. (Anno Mundi) refers to a Calendar era based on the Biblical creation of the world. The computation was based on the Septuagint version of the Scripture, and placed the date of Creation at 5509 – years before the Incarnation. Its year one, the supposed date of creation, was 1 September 5509 to 31 August 5508 BC. Consequently, the year 6513 begins on 1 September 1004 and ends on 31 August 1005.
- 4 Giovanelli 1966, 134.
- 5 Follieri 1993, 121.
- 6 Giovanelli 1962, 15.
- 7 Ševčenko 1981, 191–2; Høgel 2002, 23.
- 8 Van Uytfanghe 1993, 135–88, esp. 148–9.
- 9 Ladner 1967, 235.
- 10 Dyas 2005, 15.
- 11 Ladner 1967, 245.
- 12 Rocchi 1904, 12–18; Zagari and Valenti 2009.
- 13 The hills consist of an outer circle, 6–8 miles (10–13 km) in diameter, rising to 3,113 feet (949 m) at Mount Cavo, and an inner crater rim, about 1.5 miles (2 km) across, rising to 3,136 feet (956 m) at Mount Faete.
- 14 Guillaumont 1968, 32.
- 15 Cavanaugh 2011, 84.
- 16 Ladner 1967, 235.
- 17 Morison 1912, 43, or <www.archive.org/stream/basilsrule00moriuoft/basilsrule00moriuoft_djvu.txt> [accessed on October 14, 2016].
- 18 Sterk 1998, 232–33.
- 19 Morris 2001, 44.
- 20 Roth and Wittich 1978, 542.
- 21 Weber 1989, 482.
- 22 Giovanelli 1966, 117.

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16 St Bartholomew of Grottaferrata between tradition and innovation

Angela Prinzi

Within Italo-Greek monasticism stands the figure of St Bartholomew the Younger (Rossano, 979?/981? – Grottaferrata, 1054), the third *hegumenos* of the community of Grottaferrata; he was the beloved disciple of Neilos, whose asceticism and virtue he perfectly imitated. For this reason the monk and copyist John from Rossano,¹ active at Grottaferrata in the first half of the thirteenth century, called him φῶς φωτὸς ἀπαύγασμα (“light that reflects from the light”) and explicitly ἀπαύγασμα λαμπροῦ Νεῖλου Ρουσιῶν (“reflection of the shining Neilos of Rossano”) respectively in the *Enkomion*² and in the first of the four canons that he composed in honor of Bartholomew.³ The *Enkomion* and these canons are John’s original work and, as sources on Bartholomew’s life, are added to the *Bios*⁴ and to the original *akolouthia*, comprising two canons, of which only the first can be attributed with certainty to Luke,⁵ and various liturgical troparia. The composition of the four canons and of the *Enkomion* matures within the plan of the liturgical development of Bartholomew’s cult, promoted in 1230 by the *praepositus* of the monastery of Grottaferrata, Pankratios:⁶ he wished to equalize *in toto* the saint’s memory to that of his master through a series of expedients such as the institution of the *octava*,⁷ the *translatio reliquiarum*⁸ and, last but not least, the expansion of the pre-existing and limited hagiographic and hymnographic *proprium*. Therefore he commissioned from John a manuscript containing, besides the traditional *dossier*, a new hagiography and *ad hoc* hymnography. As a result of this commission John wrote the current *Crypt. B.β.III*,⁹ composing *ex novo* the four canons and the *Enkomion* (written respectively at ff. 19v–80v and 87r–137v of the manuscript) and merely transcribing in the last section the *Bios* (ff. 142r–169v) and the original *akolouthia* (ff. 171r–190v).

The work by John of Rossano in both prose and verse is an innovation with respect to content when compared to the older hymnographic *proprium* and the *Bios*: the canons and the *Enkomion* report details and information that were missing from the earlier tradition. These new elements can be organized into three main groups: author’s inventions, details from other Italo-Greek hagiographic traditions, and information

ascribable to *topoi* omitted from the pre-existent hagiographic and hymnographic tradition of Bartholomew. The first biographical reference provided by John in the *Enkomion* seems to belong to this last type of innovation: whereas the anonymous author of the *Bios* simply records Bartholomew's parents' εὐσέβεια following a common hagiographical *topos*,¹⁰ John remembers the initial reluctance, their unwillingness to accept their son's choice, when he was still a boy, to embrace monastic life:

(...) θαυμαστόν ἐστι-λέγων-τοῦτο τὸ σχῆμα καί, ὥς ὑπολαμβάνω, καὶ λίαν σωτήριον, οὗ χάριν καὶ σφόδρα μοι τὸ ἐγκάρδιον περιφλέγεται· καὶ μοι, εἴ μοι ἐπεύξησθε, ἀναχωρήσειν ἐν μονῇ προθυμοῦμαι. Οὐκ εἶχεν οὖν καὶ τοὺς γονεῖς συμφωνοῦντας εὐθύς, (...)

Transl.: this garb – he said – for which my heart wholly burns is wonderful and, as I think, no doubt salvific; and as for me, if you pray for me, I wish to withdraw to a monastery. However he soon found that his parents were against his will.¹¹

The very reason for this reluctance – linked by the panegyrist to another *Leitmotiv*, that of the nobility of the “*genos*” – seems to be, in the broader survey of hagiographical literature, another novel additional element: in fact, the contrast between Bartholomew and his parents was due – as can be deduced from the *Enkomion* – not to their (topical) lack of εὐσέβεια,¹² but to the fact that he was the only heir to a large family fortune.¹³

With respect to another recurring hagiographical *topos*, the saint's παιδεία,¹⁴ which is overlooked by the anonymous author of the *Bios*, John informs us in the *Enkomion* that Bartholomew was entrusted to the teachers of grammar and rhetoric, and that he soon surpassed his peers in intelligence.¹⁵ At the age of 12 the saint practiced asceticism and virtue, a detail known only from the *Enkomion*:¹⁶ far from being a historically established point in his biography, it rather seems to refer to a traditional *topos*¹⁷ common to both Jewish and Christian sources, which is combined with the *puer senex* by the panegyrist. This *puer senex* tradition¹⁸ was repeated in similar terms in the third canon.¹⁹ The *topos* considers the age of 12 the one at which one makes final decisions: it seems to be used here by John as a premise of the decision, taken shortly thereafter by Bartholomew, almost adolescent, to leave his home and join Neilos, who later tonsured him.²⁰

John introduced in his canons an additional new element that was not found in the oldest hagiographic and hymnographic tradition about Bartholomew, namely, the reference to μύρον (perfumed ointment);²¹ precisely because of this *topos*, Bartholomew is celebrated as μυροππύτωρ (bestower of ointments).²² Often associated in hagiographic literature with the relics of a saint,²³ the μύρον is a tangible manifestation of the holiness to which Bartholomew was predestined from the maternal

womb, as the same panegyrist recalls in a section of the *Enkomion* where he praised his perseverance in asceticism even after being elected hegumen of the community of Grottaferrata.²⁴

Another new element in John's *Enkomion* is the story of the baptism in the holy font of the Cathedral in Rossano (the so called Καθολική), briefly reported by John in the *Enkomion*,²⁵ that is not present in the previous biographical tradition concerning Bartholomew (although it is also a *Leitmotiv* in the *Lives* of the Saints).²⁶ He writes also about the detail of the name – Basil – given to the saint by his parents on that occasion and about the fact that, according to custom,²⁷ he took the name Bartholomew when professing monastic vows.²⁸ We may contrast this information with that found in the canons, where the panegyrist proposes a folk etymology of the name “Basil,” bringing it back to the verb βασιλεύειν (‘to dominate’), related to the saint’s ability to dominate passions.²⁹ This particular ability, only revealed by John, may have been drawn from the *Life* of St Bartholomew from Simeri (mid-eleventh century), a fellow-countryman and namesake of the saint of Grottaferrata, and founder of the *Patir* in Rossano.³⁰ Probably the hagiographical tradition proposes it in order to indirectly introduce a new element in the panegyric tradition, namely Bartholomew’s master, Neilos, inventing a possible baptismal name for him also. In fact, after reaffirming the original name of Bartholomew, always in the *Enkomion*, John reveals his master’s name as a layman: Neilos was originally baptized as Nicholas.³¹

One of the two prodigious events, both unknown to the older tradition and added by John to the series of *miracula* performed by Bartholomew, seems rather borrowed partly from another Italo-Greek saint, St Sabas from Collesano (late ninth century).³² According to the *Enkomion*, Bartholomew, surprising some thieves at night in the warehouse of the monastery of Grottaferrata, not only helped them to fill the sacks without being recognized, but he also prodigiously multiplied the food provisions in one of the storehouses that had already been looted.³³ Just as in the *Life* of St Sabas, it was hunger that led the thieves to raid the monastery’s warehouse and in both cases it was the saint who helped to fill the sacks with food; moreover, in both texts, the criminals, after recognizing the saint, repent and are forgiven. They are then encouraged not to steal anymore but instead to ask him for food when they needed some, keeping confidence in the future. In attributing the same type of miracle to Bartholomew, John adds to what is narrated in his source the miracle of the multiplication of food, retrieving a *topos* that is found already in the Old and New Testament.³⁴ John also adds a *variatio* to this *topos*: Bartholomew multiplies food not because of the famine that worries the monks, as is typical when this *topos* is used, but rather because of his desire to give lavishly to the robbers, as proof of his immense charity. Surely, it is in order to enhance Bartholomew’s ἐλεημοσύνη that the panegyrist enriches the event with imaginative

details: the thieves were hosted at the monastery until the following morning and, apart from the sacks already filled with the help of the saint, they were given four more sacks, loaded onto some beasts of burden belonging to the monastery:

μένουσιν ἕως ἡμέρας καὶ γεμίσας αὐτῶν σάκκους καὶ τέσσαρας ἄλλους τῶν τῆς μονῆς, ἐπιβαλὼν κτήνεσι τῆς αὐτῆς, χαίροντας ἐξαπέστειλεν οἴκαδε, ...

Transl.: they stayed there until the (following) morning and then he despatched them home full of joy, after having filled their sacks and another four belonging to the monastery and then having loaded them onto beasts of burden belonging to it.³⁵

The celebration of Bartholomew's charity seems to be implied in the second miracle, also told in the *Enkomion*, as a result of John's *ingenium*: the plague that had decimated livestock was stopped miraculously through the intercession of the saint, and it seemed that Bartholomew exhorted the shepherds to earmark a third of their flocks to provide for the poor, widows, orphans and women about to get married.³⁶ Even the place reserved by the panegyrist to these two wonders in the series of miracles worked by the saint seems to have a celebrative intent: the two miracles, listed below that of the famine, which was already known to the hagiographic and hymnographic tradition of Bartholomew as an emblematic mark of his charity, form a section designed to enhance, among all virtues, precisely Bartholomew's ἐλεημοσύνη.

An additional original contribution by John to the hagiographic and hymnographic tradition on the saint's *Life* is found in another episode: the dedication of young Bartholomew by his parents to the icon of the Virgin "Acheiropita" – that means, not painted by human hands, as explained by John in the *Enkomion*³⁷ – which was preserved in the Καθολικὴ of Rossano.³⁸ By the *Acheiropita* the saint was enlightened and filled with grace and virtue, as the panegyrist widely recalls in the *Enkomion*³⁹ and in the canons.⁴⁰

The detail about the monastery to which Bartholomew moved while still young⁴¹ and where he became a monk after overcoming his parents's initial hostility, also known thanks to the *Enkomion*, is most likely aimed at glorifying the city of Rossano: in spite of the vagueness of the information reported in the *Bios*,⁴² the panegyrist identifies the monastery with that of St John Calybites at Orito, located about two miles away from Rossano:

οἱ εὐσεβεῖς ἐκεῖνοι πέμπουσιν αὐτὸν εἰς τὸ μέρος ἐκεῖνον τῆς πόλεως, μόνον οὐχὶ ὡς μίλια δύο, εἰς τὴν τοῦ Καλυβίτου μονήν, τὴν ἐπικαλουμένην τοῦ Ὁρίτου, ἐνθα περίξ κῶμαί τε καὶ χωρία ὑπάρχει· οὐ γὰρ ἦν ἡ τοῦ ἁγίου πατρὸς ἔτι καταστᾶσα, ...

Transl.: and those pious men sent him to that part of the town, only about two miles away, to the monastery of St John Calybites, called Orito, where there are villages and farms all around, as the monastery of the Holy Father had not been founded yet.⁴³

As Enrica Follieri well observed, this news is probably improvised and seems to be a result of the inspiration of those who, like John, knew the city and its surroundings very well.⁴⁴ Moreover, according to the report of the panegyrist, the choice of monastery of Orito was in a certain sense “forced,” because the unidentified “monastery of the father” hadn’t been founded yet; according to Giovanelli, the obscure periphrasis referred to the monastery of Grottaferrata, Neilos’s foundation *par excellence*, where Neilos “turned his brothers and scattered sons into a community.”⁴⁵ However, it is plausible that John wants to make an allusion to the monastery of Grottaferrata from a personal point of view, referring to it as the place where he lived and carried out his activity as a copyist.

There is another anecdote, reported once again in the *Enkomion*, that seems to be improvised. According to it, Bartholomew, who practiced strict asceticism, was misled cunningly by lying from his brethren, who often scolded him for such sourness: he confessed to them that he observed fasting only in the presence of others, but that he ate in secret, and spent the night not praying, but sleeping.⁴⁶ By inventing this curious tale, the panegyrist wants to celebrate the dedication of the saint to exhausting fasting and vigils and probably to insert a variation compared with what was narrated in the *Bios* about Bartholomew’s childhood. In fact, the anonymous hagiographer of the *Vita Bartholomei* mentions that the saint was sent of necessity to an unnamed village near the monastery and that, invited by the inhabitants to have lunch with them, he refused, saying that he had eaten at the monastery, where he also abstained from food, telling the monks that he had already eaten at the village.⁴⁷ The intent of this episode is clearly to emphasize Bartholomew’s early predilection for ascetical fasting, mentioned in the *Enkomion*.⁴⁸ Conversely, it is here that John shows some care and attention to detail when reporting some specific facts that were overlooked in the more concise and less impressionistic story by the hagiographer.

A first element concerns the transfer of Neilos’s community to Grottaferrata in 1004 from the village of Serperi, where it had settled in 994, after leaving the monastery of Valletuce: whereas the anonymous author of the *Bios* gives the news of Neilos’s death⁴⁹ after recalling the harsh ascetic practices in which the disciple and the master used to measure themselves during their stay at Serperi,⁵⁰ the panegyrist clearly distinguishes the two moments through a formula of transition that acts as a watershed between the “Campanian” and “Roman” phase.⁵¹ Instead, the second clarification regards the election of Bartholomew as *begumenos*, which occurred a few years after Neilos’s death. In spite of the more

general observation of the hagiographer, who recalls that the saint was below the minimum age when he was called – forced by his brothers – to take up this position,⁵² John states that he had recently become over 25.⁵³ In fact, in 1004 Bartholomew was less than 30 years old, which was then the age considered canonical by the Greek church to become *hegumenos*:⁵⁴ hence his request was supported by a coadjutor, Leontios. According to the story told by the hagiographer, the saint made this choice because of his humility and moderation:

ὁμῶς κἀντεῦθεν τὸ ταπεινὸν δεικνύων καὶ μέτριον, οὐ μόνος τοιούτου συστήματος ἡγεῖσθαι κατεδέξατο, ἕνα δὲ τούτων, συνέσει τε καὶ ἀγχινοῖα διαφέροντα, εἰς ἐπιστάσιαν συμπαραβαλεῖν ἐξητήσατο, ...

Transl.: however, even in this showing humility and moderation, he did not accept to guide all alone that community, but asked to have as a help one of the members who excelled for intelligence and insight.⁵⁵

However, according to John, Bartholomew made this request, even though he was aware of going against the rules, because he did not want to fail in the observation of one of the fundamental monastic vows, which is obedience:

ἐξ ὧν [*scil.* τῶν ἱερῶν μοναχῶν] αἰτεῖται συνηγεμόνα, οὗ γεναμένου διὰ μόνον τὸ πεισθῆναι, τὸν εὐπειθέστατον τὰ πάντα, κἂν ἐν τούτῳ πεισματικός, οὐ γὰρ ἦν τοῦτο κανονικόν, ...

Transl.: to them [i.e., to the holy monks] he asked for someone to support him in the exercise as *hegumenos*, since this happened solely so that he could obey obedience, as he was the most obedient everything although he realized that it was not in conformity with the rules.⁵⁶

The day of the saint's death is also known only from the *Enkomion*: in spite of the vagueness with which the information is reported in the *Bios*, where the hagiographer only remembers that his passing took place at sunset,⁵⁷ on the same day when the monk Leontios heard a mysterious voice singing glory to Heaven,⁵⁸ John specifies, after recalling this same anecdote, that Bartholomew died on 11 November, *dies festus* of the megalomartyrs Menas and Companions and of John the Merciful, to whom the saint is compared in the canons:⁵⁹

ταῦτα δὲ ἐγένετο, κατὰ τὴν ἐνδεκάτην ἡμέραν Νοεμβρίου, ἐν τῇ λαμπρᾷ ἑορτῇ τῶν μεγαλομαρτύρων Χριστοῦ Μητᾶ καὶ τῶν σὺν αὐτῷ καὶ τοῦ (...) Ἰωάννου (...) θεοκλήτου Ἐλεήμονος. Ἐν ᾗ καὶ Χριστὸς μετὰ δόξης τὴν ἱερὰν Βαρθολομαίου καὶ παρθενικὴν (...) ψυχὴν προσεδέξατο, ...

Transl.: this fact happened on the eleventh day of November, on the bright feast of the megalomartyrs of Christ Menas and Companions and of John (. . .) called by God the Merciful. On that same day Christ welcomed in glory Bartholomew's holy and virginal soul.⁶⁰

Although the original contribution to the work in verse and prose by John is unquestionable, a more careful study of the hagiographical tradition – and especially of the hymnographical one – about Bartholomew reveals that not all that might seem an innovation, introduced by John, is such in reality: in fact, in several cases, the panegyrist simply repeats *clichés* and details omitted by the author of the *Bios*, but already found in the primitive *akolouthia* of the saint within the tradition. Among them we find, *in primis*, the detail about Bartholomew's Rossanese native origin, considered by Enrica Follieri as an improvised piece of evidence; according to this recurring hagiographical *topos*,⁶¹ John probably invented this detail in order to praise his hometown, presenting it as homeland not only to Neilos, but also to his beloved disciple.⁶² Although this is a matter not otherwise known in the *Bios*, where the hagiographer only remembers Bartholomew's Calabrian origin,⁶³ the identification of his *πατρις* with Rossano is indeed already in the tradition: the saint is in fact celebrated as Πουσιανίτης in the last of the three *apolytikia* of tone II, that are part of the most ancient hymnographic *proprium* of the saint, by being equated to the light that emanates from a sunbeam:⁶⁴ ὡς ἀκτίς ἐξ ἡλίου ἐκ Πουσιάνων ἐξαστράψας, διήλθες ἕως Ῥωμάνων, (transl.): “like a ray of light (shining) from the sun, you, shining from Rossano, reached the Romans from there.”⁶⁵ This detail is therefore a simple restatement by John, who uses it in the *Enkomion* – where it occurs twice,⁶⁶ the first time immediately after the προοίμιον, in obedience to Menander Rhetor's conventions⁶⁷ – and in the canons;⁶⁸ in the second of these canons, in a way not less evocative than in the *apolytikion*, Bartholomew's native origin from Rossano is expressed through a reference to the σπάργανα, that is, the swaddling clothes, a source of pride for the Calabrian city.

Taken from a part of the tradition is also the *topos* of the nobility of the γένος (*genos*, ‘descent’) to which the saint belongs.⁶⁹ This element is omitted by the anonymous author of the *Bios*, but remembered in the first of the three *sticherà prosomia* of plagal mode IV⁷⁰ and in the canon by Luke only *en passant*, through a fleeting reference to the material possessions belonging to Bartholomew's parents.⁷¹ The material possessions of Bartholomew's wealthy family are among the sacrifices required by the choice of monastic life even in the last two canons by John:⁷² in the third of them, especially, the saint's parents's κτήσεις (‘possessions’) are indirectly mentioned through the neutral σύμπαντα, that most likely includes even the home and family, already associated, in memory of the hardships imposed by the σχῆμα ἀγγελικόν (‘angelic dress,’ that is, the monastic habit) in the oldest hymnographic *proprium*.

A third detail, which is also topical⁷³ and equally passed over in silence by the hagiographer of Bartholomew, is the saint's parents's περιφάνεια ('notoriety'), reported by Luke in his canon⁷⁴ and proposed again by John in the *Enkomion*.⁷⁵ Furthermore, here the panegyrist specifies that it was precisely the *genos*, from which Bartholomew's parents came, that gave distinguished judges and governors to Italy from the time of Emperor Maurice, thus using this occasion to highlight also the antiquity of their εὐγένεια (nobility):

ἐκ τοιούτων [*scil.* εὐγενῶν καὶ ἐπιφανῶν] γὰρ ἦν, ὅτι καὶ κριταὶ καὶ
 ραϊκτώρες ἱλλουστρίοι καὶ μεγιστάνες ὑπῆρχον τῆς Ἰταλίας ἀπάσης καὶ
 Καλαβρίας καὶ μέρους τῆς Σικελίας ἀπὸ Μανρικού βασιλέως, ...

Transl.: indeed he came from ancestors who were noble and distinguished as to be judges and rhetoricians of the highest repute, and magnates throughout Italy, both in Calabria and in Sicily since the time of Emperor Maurice.⁷⁶

The celebration of several virtues of the saint is the heritage of a part of the tradition and corresponds, in this sense, to a widespread *topos* in hagiographical literature:⁷⁷ the saint was praised by John in the last of the four canons that he composed in honor of Bartholomew as δοχεῖον πασῶν ἀρετῶν, "receptacle of all virtues."⁷⁸ Of those virtues, mentioned in the oldest *proprium* and in the works by John, only two, in fact, are reflected in Bartholomew's *Bios*: his skill in composition⁷⁹ – with regard to which the panegyrist borrows from tradition the comparison with famous figures of hymnographers, including Joseph – and the topical ἀγρυπνία ('vigil'), in the exercise of which the saint seems to compete with the angels. Purity (ἀγνεία), mildness (σωφροσύνη) and temperance (πραότης) are passed over in silence by the hagiographer; they are evoked in the first of the three *apolytikia* of tone II⁸⁰ and partly in the *kontakion* interposed between the sixth and seventh ode of the canon by Luke.⁸¹ These virtues are reiterated by John both in the *Enkomion*⁸² and in the fourth canon: here the three virtues (ἀρεταὶ) are celebrated along with other virtues and, of the two biblical characters to which tradition ascribes them, only the reference to David as an example of mildness is preserved.⁸³

Instead, the conclusion of the episode, relating the meeting of Bartholomew and Pope Benedict IX, is a curious episode. According to the tradition of Grottaferrata, the pope, conscious of having committed an unspecified sin, turned to the saint, obtaining forgiveness from him. In addition, he also obtained from the saint an indication of the way forward in order to reconcile himself with God: to give up the pontificate and retire to private life.⁸⁴ Luke has the same outcome in the canon⁸⁵ and in the *kontakion* interposed between the sixth and seventh odes,⁸⁶ where the same effect is found in a strongly allusive way. Instead, a slightly different conclusion can be read in the *Enkomion*, where, after being

forced to abdicate the pontificate, the pope is then exhorted by the saint to embrace the cloistered life:

οὐ δεῖ σε τὴν ἀρχιεπρόεδρον ἀξίαν κατέχειν —φησὶν— ἀλλὰ συνταπεινωθεῖναι μοι καὶ σὺν ἡμῖν κλαῦσαι τὰς ἁμαρτίας σου καὶ οὕτως ἐξιλεώσῃ Θεόν. Ὁ δὲ πάπας παῖς εὐθὺς γέγονε τοῦ ὁσίου καὶ κατὰ πάντα ἐπόμενος· διὸ καὶ σωτηρίαν ἐφεύρατο μονάσας καὶ βασιλείας θείας ἡξίωται, ...

Transl.: it is not appropriate that you hold the papal dignity – he said – (it is) rather (suitable) that you humble yourself with me and grieve over your sins with us [i.e., the monks] and thus you will make it up with God. And the pope immediately became spiritual son to the saint, obeying him in everything; so he became a monk, found salvation and was worthy of God's kingdom.⁸⁷

The image of the pope in a penitent role is proposed even by John in the third of his canons: here, by omitting any reference to the removal from office of Pope Benedict, the author seems to consider the prospect of a monastic life recalled by reference to the exercise of asceticism almost as the only way to obtain God's forgiveness: καὶ ἀσκήσεις / πλείστας ἐνδειξάμενος, / πνεῦμα χαίρων Θεῷ παραδίδωσι, and after he gave ample evidence/of asceticism, joyfully he consigns his soul to God.⁸⁸ In that case too John did not invent anything new, but he simply proposed a version of the facts already known to a part of the tradition.⁸⁹ The story of Bartholomew and Pope Benedict IX ends with the renunciation of the latter of the pontifical dignity and with his entrance into the monastery already included in the anonymous canon celebrating the saint, as we have seen:

ιερέα τῆς Ῥώμης, / πάτερ, τὸν πρόεδρον, / σκελισθέντα ὡς ἔγνω, παυσόφους λόγοις σου, / ἔπεισας αὐτὸν / τὸν θρόνον παραιτήσασθαι / καὶ μονήρει βίῳ / τοῦτον τελειωθῆναι, ...

Transl.: as soon as you heard, o father, that the priest, the patriarch of Rome made a mistake, in very wise words you persuaded him to abdicate the (apostolic) throne and to be initiated into monastic life.⁹⁰

Finally, only known from this last source, two details are omitted both by the anonymous author of the *Bios* and John, and they are both probably borrowed from the *Vita Nili*. The first concerns the diet followed by Bartholomew: as reported in a rather generic way by the hagiographer, he lived only on necessary food,⁹¹ which is instead specifically identified by the anonymous author of the canon as bread and cooked pulses,⁹² borrowing, probably straight from the *Bios* of St Nilos,⁹³ a recurring hagiographical *topos*. Maybe from this same source came, always in the same canon, the detail concerning Bartholomew's tunic – his only one – which

he wore for a lifetime⁹⁴ in order to appear even in this as a perfect imitator of his master,⁹⁵ “a bright reflection of a shining light,” according to John’s effective metaphor.

In conclusion, the work by John of Rossano in both prose and verse is really a mine of information, that was missing from earlier hagiographical and hymnographic tradition of Bartholomew; within the plan of the liturgical development of Bartholomew’s cult, these new details are the original contribution of the monk and copyist from Grottaferrata.

Notes

- 1 See Rocchi 1893, 39; Giovanelli 1962, 138–9. For John’s writing activity see Parenti 1999, 201–12, with a critical assessment of biographical data; Parenti 2002, 669–70; Lucà 2003, 149–50.
- 2 Io. Ross., *Laud. Barth.*, ed. Giovanelli 1962, 124, l. 20. As regards the *Enkomion* and the oldest *akolouthia* of St Bartholomew published by Giovanelli 1962 (respectively on pp. 123–70 and 87–112), the translation of portions of the text and *cola* mentioned in this contribution is mine.
- 3 Io. Ross., *can.* I, *colon* 218: see Prinzi 2013, 198–9.
- 4 As regards the discussed paternity of the *Bios*, that the tradition attributes to Luke, a disciple of the saint, ed. Paroli 2008, 59–63.
- 5 His acrostic says in fact “Δέχου, μέγιστε Βαρθολομαῖε, ὕμνον παρὰ ἀχρίου Λουκᾶ,” ed. Giovanelli 1962, 89: “Accept, o great Bartholomew, this hymn by the inept Luke.”
- 6 See Prinzi 2010, 57–76.
- 7 It is the post-festive period of the main festivals of the fixed cycle (September 1 – August 31, according to the Byzantine liturgical year), called μεθεόρτιον ο μεθεόρτιον, which could be extended to include the celebration of the memory of a saint: cf. Mercenier 1953², 28–68. This period was no longer than eight days – hence the name of *octava* or ὀκτωήμερον –, during the last of which the *apodosis* or restitution of the feast took place. See also Velkovska 1998, 209–10.
- 8 As we gather from the final report of the folios 191r – v of the ms. *Crypt.* B. β. III, this event took place on the afternoon of 10 November 1230; the relic (his head) was exposed publicly to be worshiped by the faithful on the following day, *dies festus* of the saint, after the stationary procession, and kept in a σκεῦος (vase) of great value made by monk Barnabas. See Prinzi 2010, 70–4.
- 9 For a description of the manuscript see Rocchi 1883, 140–2; Turyn 1972, 6–11; Crisci 1990, 24 and 205–16. For a possible dating to 1230 rather than 1229 see Prinzi 2010, 60–3.
- 10 *Vita Barth.*, § 3, ll. 1–2, ed. Paroli 2008, 110: Οὗτος ἔφν μὲν τῆς Καλαβρίας γῆς, εὐσεβῶν δέ γονέων τυχών. Transl.: “He was a native of the land of Calabria and was allotted godly parents.” For the hagiographical *topos* of the εὐσεβεῖς γονεῖς see Pratsch 2005, 66–8.
- 11 Io. Ross., *Laud. Barth.*, ed. Giovanelli 1962, 126, ll. 29–33.
- 12 See Pratsch 2005, 68–72.
- 13 Io. Ross., *Laud. Barth.*, ed. Giovanelli 1962, 126, ll. 35–37: Πῶς, ἔφησαν, ἄτερ συμβουλῆς τῶν ἰλλουστρίων ἡμῶν συγγενῶν τοῦτο δράσομεν; ἄλλον ἔτι μὴ κεκτημένοι πατρόμοιον ἢ σὲ καὶ μόνον, περιφύλτατε; Transl.: “So that, they said, we can take this decision without taking advice from our illustrious relatives, since we have no other heir but you alone, oh Best Beloved?”

- 14 See Pratsch 2005, 92–9.
- 15 Io. Ross., *Laud. Barth.*, Giovanelli 1962, 126, ll. 24–25.
- 16 *Ibid.*, 127, ll. 13–15.
- 17 Concerning this see Giannarelli 1977, 127–33.
- 18 *Vita Barth.*, § 3, ll. 2–4, ed. Paroli 2008, 110: Τὴν ἀρετὴν δὲ συμβίωτην προελόμενος, ἐν παιδικῷ φρονήματι πολὺν ἐπεδείκνυτο φρόνημα. Transl.: “By electing virtue as a companion, he showed, at the time of childish wildness, a hoary wisdom,” and the canon (ed. Giovanelli 1962, 97): ῥεόντων τὸ ἄστατον / ἀπὸ βρέφους ἐκ ψυχῆς, / πᾶτερ, ἀποσεισάμενος. Transl.: “Having moved away from his soul, since he was a child, the desire for what is unstable and transitory, oh father.”
- 19 Io. Ross., *can.* III, *cola* 43–45, ed. Prinzi 2013, 242–3: Ὁ σός, παμμακάριστε, / βίος παιδόθεν διηρθρωται / καὶ, παῖς ὢν, τὰ γέροντος / ἤσκεις συνέσει πολλῇ. Transl.: “Your life, oh blessed, / has distinguished itself since childhood / and, although a child / you used to exercise the ascesis of an experienced old man.”
- 20 Although Paroli 2008, 72 considers the precise reference to the age of the twelve years as a *topos*, she makes a connection between this *topos* and the time when Bartholomew received from Neilos the monastic robes. The panegyrist mentions this dressing in the passage immediately preceding: see Io. Ross., *Laud. Barth.*, ed. Giovanelli 1962, 127, ll. 12–13. In the following passage John seems rather to refer to the period in which the saint has not left Calabria yet: he points out, in fact, that Bartholomew had become famous for his asceticism and virtue even beyond Rossano (Ρουσίων ἐπέκεινα), presumably intending to refer not only to his hometown *stricto sensu*, but also to its immediate vicinity (maybe to Orito, where Bartholomew, just over the threshold of childhood, will begin his monastic life).
- 21 Io. Ross., *can.* III, *cola* 134–135, ed. Prinzi 2013, 248–9: Ἡ ζωὴ σου, πᾶτερ, μύρον / εὐωδέστατον ἔβλυσεν; transl.: “Your life, o father, / made a fragrant ointment gush forth;” *cola* 193–195 (*ibid.*, 252–3): Διὸ καὶ μύρω κέχρισαι πνεύματι / θεῖω, δι’ οὗ μύριζε ἡμᾶς / πάντα ὁδωδότας γε; transl.: “So you were also anointed with perfumed ointment by the holy Spirit / through whom you anoint us / malodorous everywhere;” *cola* 251–253 (*ibid.*, 256–7): Μύρον ὅθεν σοι / Βαρθολομαῖος πρόσεισι / καὶ μυρίζει πάντα κόσμον; transl.: “So to you, as perfumed ointment, / Bartholomew approaches / and anoints the whole world with perfumed ointment.”
- 22 Io. Ross., *can.* III, *colon* 146, ed. Prinzi 2013, 248–9.
- 23 See Pratsch 2005, 223–4.
- 24 Io. Ross., *Laud. Barth.*, ed. Giovanelli 1962, 129, ll. 35–36: Καὶ Θεὸς καὶ πρότερον καὶ νῦν μετ’ αὐτῶν, ὁ καὶ ἐκ μήτρας αὐτὸν (*scil.* Βαρθολομαῖον) ἐκλεξάμενος καὶ καταστάς; transl.: “And God as before even now was with them, He who had chosen and predestined him since the womb.”
- 25 *Ibid.*, 125, l. 25.
- 26 See Pratsch 2005, 81–3.
- 27 See De Meester 1942, 50 (art. 116, § 3, nr. 3) and 116–17, n. 5.
- 28 Io. Ross., *Laud. Barth.*, ed. Giovanelli 1962, 127, ll. 12–13.
- 29 Io. Ross., *can.* I, *cola* 148–150, ed. Prinzi 2013, 192–3; *can.* II, *cola* 313–315 (*ibid.*, 230–31); *can.* IV, *cola* 347–348 (*ibid.*, 296–97) and *cola* 356–357 (*ibid.*, 296–97).
- 30 Ed. Paroli 2008, p 144.
- 31 Io. Ross., *Laud. Barth.*, ed. Giovanelli 1962, 129, ll. 24–26.
- 32 See Cozza-Luzi 1893, § 15, 26–7.
- 33 Io. Ross., *Laud. Barth.*, ed. Giovanelli 1962, 133, l. 28 – 134, l. 4.

- 34 See Pratsch 2005, 248–50.
- 35 Io. Ross., *Laud. Barth.*, ed. Giovanelli 1962, 133, ll. 39–134.
- 36 *Ibid.*, 134, ll. 5–20.
- 37 *Ibid.*, 125, ll. 34–38.
- 38 *Ibid.*, 125, ll. 25–26: Καὶ τοῖς ἀχράντοις αὐτῆς ποσὶ προσριφεῖς; transl.: “And deposed at Her immaculate feet.”
- 39 *Ibid.*, 125, ll. 26–27; 126, ll. 6–7; 139, ll. 20–21.
- 40 Io. Ross., *can.* III, *cola* 141–144, ed. Prinzi 2013, 248–9, and *can.* IV, *cola* 119–120, *ibid.*, 280–1.
- 41 The threshold of sixteen / seventeen years, originally fixed by the Byzantine law (see canon XVIII of St Basil) as the minimum age to undertake monastic life, was lowered to ten / eleven by the Council in Trullo (see canon XL). See in this regard De Meester 1942, 45 (art. 109 § 1, nr. 9) and 352–53, n. 10.
- 42 *Vita Barth.*, § 3, l. 2, ed. Paroli 2008, 110: Ἐξ ἀπαλῶν ὀνύχων ἐν μοναστηρίῳ δίδοται; transl.: “Since early age he was entrusted with a monastery.”
- 43 Io. Ross., *Laud. Barth.*, ed. Giovanelli 1962, 127, ll. 23–26.
- 44 See Follieri 1997, 28.
- 45 Giovanelli 1962, 151, n. 36.
- 46 Io. Ross., *Laud. Barth.*, ed. Giovanelli 1962, 128, l. 33–129, l. 10.
- 47 *Vita Barth.* § 3, ll. 7–17, ed. Paroli 2008, 110.
- 48 Io. Ross., *Laud. Barth.*, ed. Giovanelli 1962, 127, ll. 31–32: Νηστεία γὰρ καὶ ἐγκρατεία ἐκ παιδικῆς ἡλικίας φιλιωθείς, ἀδιασπάστως ἀντεῖχετο; transl.: “Mad about fasting and continence since childhood, he observed them continuously.”
- 49 As we gather from the *Vita Nili* (§ 98, ll. 24–26 and § 99, ll. 1–5), the saint died at vespers on the feast of St John the Apostle, that is at sunset of the day before September 26: see Giovanelli 1972, 133–4; Giovanelli 1966, 115–16.
- 50 *Vita Barth.*, § 4, ll. 14–22 and § 5, ll. 1–5, ed. Paroli 2008, 110–12.
- 51 Io. Ross., *Laud. Barth.*, ed. Giovanelli 1962, 129, ll. 22–23: Ἐπεὶ δὲ πρὸς Ρώμην ὁ μέγας ἀπῆρε Νεῖλος, συναπῆρεν ὡς διδασκάλῳ καὶ πατρὶ; transl.: “And when the great Neilos departed to Rome, he escorted the master and father.”
- 52 *Vita Barth.*, § 5, ll. 6–9, ed. Paroli 2008, 112. That the community of Grottaferrata had forced Bartholomew to accept the hegumenal dignity is also remembered by John in the *Enkomion* (ed. Giovanelli 1962, 129, l. 31).
- 53 Io. Ross., *Laud. Barth.*, ed. Giovanelli 1962, 129, ll. 29–30.
- 54 See De Meester 1942, 17 (art. 32, § 1 nr. 2): Aetate non minor sit annorum triginta; cf. Paroli 2008, 68, n. 16.
- 55 *Vita Barth.*, § 5, ll. 10–12, ed. Paroli 2008, 112.
- 56 Io. Ross., *Laud. Barth.*, ed. Giovanelli 1962, 129, ll. 31–33.
- 57 *Vita Barth.*, § 17, ll. 15–16, ed. Paroli 2008, 130.
- 58 *Ibid.*, 130, ll. 5–15.
- 59 Io. Ross., *can.* III, *cola* 220–222, ed. Prinzi 2013, 198–9; *can.* IV, *cola* 268–270, *ibid.*, 290–1 and *cola* 378–383, *ibid.*, 298–9.
- 60 Io. Ross., *Laud. Barth.*, ed. Giovanelli 1962, 136, ll. 33–39.
- 61 See Pratsch 2005, 56.
- 62 See Follieri 1997, 28.
- 63 *Vita Barth.*, § 3, l. 1, ed. Paroli 2008, 110: Οὗτος ἔφυ μὲν τῆς Καλαβρῶν γῆς; transl.: “He was a native of the land of Calabria.”
- 64 As Giovanelli 1962, 101, emphasizes in his translation (“O beautiful ray of the Sun [Christ]”), the star is here a metaphor of divinity (Christ, but also God).
- 65 *Ibid.*, 88.

- 66 *Ibid.*, 125, ll. 20–21: Ἐκ περιχώρου μὲν τῆς καλῆς Καλαβρίας, πατρίδος δὲ τῆς αὐτῆς τοῦ παμμάκαρος Νεῖλωνος, Ῥουσιάνων φημί τῆς πόλεως; transl.: “He came from the beautiful land of Calabria, from the homeland of the most blessed Neilos, from the city of Rossano, I mean”; *ibid.*, 138, ll. 22–24: “Χαίρετω καὶ ἡ τῶν πρωτοτόκων ἐν ἀγλαΐαις φωστήρων μήτηρ, Ῥουσιῶν μητρόπολις; transl.: “Even the mother rejoices of the two firstborns in the splendor of the stars, (their) hometown, Rossano.”
- 67 See Russell and Wilson 1981, 79: Μετὰ τὰ προοίμια ἐπὶ τὴν πατρίδα ἤξεις; transl.: “After the proemia you will come to the topic of his native country.”
- 68 Io. Ross., *can.* I, *cola* 283–284, ed. Prinzi 2013, 204–5: Χαράϊς καθαραῖς / Ῥουσία, Ῥώμη, πάτριαι / πόλεις θεοῦφαντοι; transl.: “With sincere joy, / Rome, Rossano, homelands / woven by God”; *can.* II, *cola* 274–275, *ibid.*, 226–7: Ἡ Ῥουσιῶν σὴ πάτρα / καυχωμένη σπαργάνοις; transl.: “Your homeland, Rossano, boasting of your birth”; *can.* III, *cola* 106–107, *ibid.*, 246–47: Νῦν φιλόχριστος λαὸς σε / σῆς Ῥουσιῶν; transl.: “Now the devout people / of your Rossano.”
- 69 See Pratsch 2005, 59–62.
- 70 Ed. Giovanelli 1962, 87: Πάντα κατέλιπες, / γένος καὶ ὕπαρξιν / καὶ πατρίδα, ὅσιε; transl.: “You forsook everything, o saint, your family, your substances and your homeland.”
- 71 *Ibid.*, 89: Ἐλipes, παμμάκαρ, / γένος καὶ ὕπαρξιν, / περιφάνειαν καὶ ἐνεγκαμένην; transl.: “You forsook, oh blessed, your family, your substances, its fame.”
- 72 Io. Ross., *can.* III, *cola* 254–257, ed. Prinzi 2013, 258–9: Ἀπρηνήσατο συγγένειαν καὶ σύμπαντα / Βαρθολομαῖος ὁ σός; transl.: “He denied his family and everything / Your Bartholomew”; *can.* IV, *cola* 114–115, *ibid.*, 280–1: Ἀρηνιάμενος ἅπασαν / σχέσιν γεννετόρων; transl.: “Having rejected any / possession of your parents.”
- 73 See Pratsch 2005, 59–62.
- 74 Ed. Giovanelli 1962, 89. With the term *περιφάνεια*, that the publisher translates generically as “nobility” (*ibid.*, 102), Luke intends to refer to Bartholomew’s well-known family.
- 75 Io. Ross., *Laud. Barth.*, ed. Giovanelli 1962, 125, ll. 24–25; 126, l. 34.
- 76 *Ibid.*, 126, ll. 38–40.
- 77 See Pratsch 2005, 206–9.
- 78 Io. Ross., *can.* IV, *colon* 136, ed. Prinzi 2013, 216–17.
- 79 *Vita Barth.*, § 6, ll. 5–7, ed. Paroli 2008, 112 and 114: Καὶ περὶ τὴν τῶν ἁσμάτων ποίησιν ἄκρως πονοῦμενος: μαρτυροῦσι γὰρ αὐτοῦ τὰ πάνσοφα μελωδήματα, ἃ πρὸς τε αὐτὴν τὴν ὑπεράχραντον τοῦ θεοῦ Λόγου μητέρα καὶ πρὸς τοὺς λοιποὺς ἁγίους ἐξέθετο; transl.: “He also handled with mastery the composition of songs: his very wise hymns demonstrate that, which he composed in honor of the same very blessed Mother of God’s Word and of the other saints.”
- 80 Ed. Giovanelli 1962, 88: Ἰωσήφ τὴν ἀγνείαν * καὶ σωφροσύνην, * τοῦ Δαυΐδ τε τὸν πρᾶον, * Πάτερ ἐκτήσω; transl.: “You have shown to have, o father, Joseph’s purity and temperance and David’s mildness.”
- 81 *Ibid.*, 92: Πιέζων τὸ σῶμα * ἀσκήσεως πόνοις, * ἐν ἐγκρατείᾳ * καὶ ταπεινότητι * πάσῃ κακουχίᾳ τε; transl.: “Trying to win the body by the laborious exercise of asceticism, by temperance, humility and every kind of mortification.”
- 82 Io. Ross., *Laud. Barth.*, ed. Giovanelli 1962, 130, ll. 6–11: Τῆς ἐγκρατείας φίλος (. . .) ὑπήκοος καὶ ταπεινόφρων, ὁ πρᾶος καὶ ἡσύχιος κατὰ Μωϋσὴν καὶ Δαβὶδ (. . .) ὁ τοῦ Ἰωσήφ τὴν ἀγνείαν ἀμβεβηκῶς; transl.: “fond of temperance (. . .), obedient and humble, gentle and peaceful as Moses and David (. . .), having in himself Joseph’s purity.”

- 83 Io. Ross., *can.* IV, *cola* 48–51, ed. Prinzi 2013, 274–5: Σωφροσύνην κτησάμενος / δικαιοσύνην ἅμφω, / φρόνησιν καὶ ἀνδρείαν, / ἀγνεΐαν, πραότητα; transl.: “Possessing wisdom / and all righteousness, / wisdom and strength, / purity and mildness”; *colon* 99 (*ibid.*, 274–5): Δαυὶδ τὴν πραότητα / (...) / ἀναμαζάμενος; transl.: “Having received / (. .) / David’s humility.”
- 84 This is what Bartholomew, according to the hagiographer’s story, would have advised: see *Vita Barth.*, § 9, ll. 16–17, ed. Paroli 2008, 116: Ὁ δὲ οὐ μέλλον ἦν οὐδ’ ἀναβαλλόμενος, ἀλλὰ παρευθὺς τὸν θρόνον καταλιπὼν, ἰδετεῶν ἐδείκνυντο; transl.: “And he neither delayed nor postponed, but, leaving immediately the throne, he began to lead a private life.” About an effective summary of the pope’s private vicissitudes and the controversial issue about his two abdications (in 1045 or 1048) see Luzzati Laganà 2007, 239.
- 85 Ed. Giovanelli 1962, 93: Τὸν εὐγνωμόνως, πάνσοφε, * θρόνον περιέποντα τοῦ σεπτοῦ Κορυφαίου * ἀπείργεις δὲ ἐνδίκως τῆς ἀρχιερωσύνης * τῆς ἐαυτοῦ δὲ μόνης * ἔχεσθαι σωτηρίας; transl.: “With common sense, oh wise, who occupied the throne of the holy Corypheus you take away (from it) and rightly from the papacy, (persuading him) to take care only of his salvation.”
- 86 *Ibid.*, 92–93: Καὶ ὁ πρὶν τὸν θρόνον * περιέπων λαμπρῶς * τοῦ Κορυφαίου * τῶν Ἀποστόλων * καὶ νῦν τοῖς λόγῳις σου πεισθεὶς * παραιτηθῆναι τὴν τιμὴν * ὥς πατρί σοι προσέχων * καὶ πλουσιῶς ἀπολαύων * τῶν διδασκῶν σου, * Βαρθολομαῖε σοφέ; transl.: “And he who first magnificently occupied the throne of the Corypheus of the Apostles, now persuaded by your speeches to refuse the honor following you as father and benefiting widely of your teachings, o Bartholomew wise.”
- 87 Io. Ross., *Laud. Barth.*, ed. Giovanelli 1962, 135, ll. 1–5.
- 88 Io. Ross., *can.* III, *cola* 392–394, ed. Prinzi 2013, 266–7.
- 89 Instead, François Halkin considered John no doubt in part at least responsible for further developing the story, in his opinion “manifestement fantaisistes”: see Halkin 1971, 236.
- 90 Ed. Giovanelli 1962, 97.
- 91 *Vita Barth.*, § 15, ll. 3–4, ed. Paroli 2008, 128.
- 92 Ed. Giovanelli 1962, 96: Ἐν νηστεΐαις σχολάζων * καὶ προσευχαῖς, * πάτερ, σιτιζόμενος * ἄρτῳ ὀσπρίοις τε βρεκτοῖς * ἐκζεστοῖς πάντα τὸν χρόνον σου; transl.: “By devoting yourself to fasting and prayer, o father, feeding on bread and cooked legumes for a lifetime.”
- 93 *Vita Nili*, § 16, ll. 6–8, ed. Giovanelli 1972, 63; Giovanelli 1966, 32.
- 94 Ed. Giovanelli 1962, 97: Μονοχίτων τὸν πάντα * χρόνον ἐζησας; transl.: “Wearing for a lifetime only a tunic.”
- 95 According to the testimony of the anonymous author of the *Vita Nili*, the saint had two tunics, wearing each alternately at the turn of each year: see *Vita Nili*, § 18, ll. 24–25, ed. Giovanelli 1972, 66: Ἐπαίρων οὖν τὸ τρίχινον ἐνδυμα αὐτοῦ, ὃ ἀπέκειτο ἐν ἐτέρῳ ἐνιαυτῷ, ἐτίθει εἰς ξύλον; transl.: “So, he picked up another sackcloth of skin, that he put away for the following year, and attached it to a shoot,” cf. Giovanelli 1966, 35.

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